THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN TAMILNADU DURING THE SANGAM AGE

C. BALASUBRAMANIAN

The Status of Women in Tamil Nadu During the Sangam Age

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FOREWORD

Dr. MALCOLM S. ADISESHIAH,
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It is appropriate that 1975 which was proclaimed by the United Nations as the International Women's Year and the following year 1976 which was declared by that same august body as the start of the United Nations Decade for Women should see the publication by the University of Madras of the Diwan Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Rao Endowment Lectures 1971-72 devoted to the subject, "The Status of Women in Tamil Nadu during the Sangam Age." The status of women is a theme which has no beginning and no end. It is perennially alive and insistently challenging.

Reading through this clear, concise and illuminating historical commentary on the status of women in this part of our vast country at the time of Valluvar's famous writings and Nakkirar's memorable poems, two thoughts come to my mind.

The first is whether we, the people of India, the community in Tamil Nadu, will learn from history. This is an important issue because nothing that has been adumbrated on the status of women either internationally in the World Plan of Action adopted by the United Nations Conference on the Status of Women held last year in Mexico city of set forth in detail, precision and majestic sweep in our National Report on the Status of Women in India entitled, "Towards Equality," contains anything that has not been recorded two thousand years ago, as evidenced in the lectures published in this monograph. And so the question is, will we learn from history or will we once more live up to the generalisation that the only lesson that men (and women) learn from history is that they never learn from history?

The second issue is related to our capacity for verbalisation and the consequences of our normative life styles. How far are the characterisations, rights and qualities attributed to

women in the Sangam Age a reflection of what was in fact the practice, the reality in existence? Are the various facets of the portrayal of the Status of Women normative standards set forth or descriptions of conditions as they existed. On the capacity for verbalisation, we, as a people, seem to possess somewhat unique abilities. Anyone reading through two thousand years from now – say in 4001 A.D.— our laws, exhortations, economic, social and juridicial writings and political manifestos and rhetoric that issued between 1970-75 about eradicating poverty would naturally come to the conclusion that we had abolished poverty in this land by the nineteen seventies. Again our sacred literature is really a series of normative essays in the nature and being of God, man and the duties and obligations incumbent on us as a consequence of the God-Man equation. It has little relation to how we conduct our religious and secular life in the daily round which makes up our being. And so the question is whether we can slow down on our capacity for verbalism and practice a little of what we preach, can we close even a little the yawning and growing gap between the normative and positive in our lives?

If we can move a little further forward on both these issues—learn from our history and live by what we say – then, I believe this monograph by Dr. Balasubramanian would have served a useful and necessary purpose.

University Buildings,
31st May 1976.

MALCOLM S. ADISESHIAH,
Vice-Chancellor.

A Word Ere you Read...

Sangam age is regarded as the 'Golden Age' in the history of Tamil Literature. As rightly pointed out by Xavier S. Thaninayagam, 'Sangam Tamil has the characteristic of being extremely concise and curt of delineating magnificient word—pictures with great economy of language.' To put it in a nutshell, 'brevity was the soul of Sangam wit.' But, it is noteworthy that a number of comprehensive volumes have been published on Sangam Literature, and yet to be in the future also. Such is the greatness of Sangam classics.

The present volume deals precisely with the status of women in all dimensions in Tamil Nadu during the Sangam age. It is to be remembered that the scope of this study is limited for obvious reason. But, I hope it will certainly inspire the scholars to take up further profound studies.

With a deep sense of gratitude, I sincerely thank Dr. Malcolm S. Adiseshiah for having adorned this volume with his venerable and valuable foreword and Prof. Dr. N. Sanjeevi for his excellent encouragement. I am also deeply indebted to Thiru C. K. Kumaraswamy, the Registrar, University of Madras for his prompt help in bringing this volume to light.

I hope the Tamil world would warmly welcome this volume.

9-6-1976, Madras-600 005. } **Dr. C. BALASUBRAMANIAN**

The Diwan Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Rao Endowment Lectures 1971-72

BY

DR. C. BALASUBRAMANIAN

THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN TAMIL NADU DURING THE SANGAM AGE

Revered President, Ladies representing Motherhood, Learned Colleagues, Scholars and Gentlemen!

The honour of delivering the Diwan Bahadur Krishnaswami Rao Endowment lectures this year has been graciously extended to me by the University of Madras; and for this I am extremely beholden to the distinguished Vice-Chancellor of the University, Padmasri N. D. Sundaravadivelu and the members of the Syndicate of the University. My heartfelt thanks are due to Thiru. C. E. Ramachandran, Head of the Department of History and Dr. N. Sanjeevi, Head of the Department of Tamil, University of Madras, but for whose encouragement and assistance, I could not have accepted this great responsibility.

I deem it a great honour and privilege to deliver this talk under the Presidentship of Padmabhushan Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, who is one of the outstanding Philosophers in modern India, nay in the whole world. His vast erudition and comprehension of the Philosophy of Sankara i.e. Advaita have been recognised the world over, and his

illuminative exposition of the Philosophy has been frequently sought after, by scholars of India as well as foreign.

Under the convention governing this Endowment I am obliged to deliver the lectures in English, even though Tamil would have been the appropriate medium. However I shall be supplementing my English talk with a few relevant quotations from the Tamil classics.

The subject of my talk today and tomorrow is "The status of women in Tamil Nadu during the Sangam age." You are all aware that the matter has already been thoroughly discussed by many scholars, and much light has been focussed on the social conditions of women during the Sangam period.

I hope my sense of humility will not be misunderstood if I may disclose to you that I myself had been interested in this study for a pretty long time, in fact from the days I had been an undergraduate in the Government Arts College, Madras. I am happy to state that during my teenages, I was inspired to compose a poem on the "Rights of Women," and I am gratified to mention that among the competitors drawn from three Universities, I won the distinction of being awarded the first prize for the poem.

My interest in the conditions and welfare of women of Tamil Nadu was kept sustained by the valuable and close contacts I had with one of the greatest of scholars of all time Thiru. Vi Ka. and the distinguished poet, Baāratidāsaṉ who was at once a visionary and a revolutionary.

I should like to take this opportunity to acknowledge with love and respect, that the greatest source of inspiration in my literary pursuits had been my mentor, Dr. M. Varadarajanar. It was a unique experience for me to find that all these three distinguished men of letters possessed a very tender heart, towards women and advocated the enthronement of women as goddesses of the earth. As a

student I sat at the feet of the learned professors and lecturers of Pachaiyappa's College and drank deep at the founts of the ancient Sangam literature, and I learnt more and more of the greatness of womanhood. Now that an opportunity had presented itself, I seized it quickly to express the results of my own examination of the condition and status of women of the Sangam Age.

The Tamils have enriched the Hindu philosophy by contributing to it the *Sakti-Sivam Tatva* which is peculiar to the *Saiva Siddhanta* system of thought. The Tamils have always believed in the manifestation of God as Sivam and Sakti in a single form. Saint Appar realised at Tiruvaiyāṟu in his ripe old age that the Supreme God had manifested Himself in this *Sakti-Sivam* aspect in all the categories of life on earth. He has described the Vision he had of this aspect in one of the most beautiful soul stirring and oft quoted hymns commencing with "*Mādhar Piraikkaṉṉiyāṉai.*"

Kavimaṇi Dēsika Vināyakam Piḷḷai, one of the most loved and respected modern poets sings in simple and chaste Tamil, that one should have performed severe penance in the previous births to be gifted to be born a woman on earth [1] Poet Bhāratidāsaṉ sings that a wife sublimates her husband's life and guides him on the correct path.[2] He further exalts the womanhood of Tamil Nadu and states that it is due to the feminine touch that man becomes generous, attains moral height and acquires all the masculine virtues.[3] His appreciation of the fair sex reaches sky high when he says that a woman values her husband's grace towards her as the very essence of her life even though he might have forsaken her.[4]

The Sangam literature uniformly praises the womanhood of Tamil Nadu. The women of the Sangam period had distinguished themselves in their cultural attainments and virtuous living. Avvaiyār, the great poetess of very high literary attainments, untrammelled wisdom, and strength of

purpose addresses the land in these words: "O Land, you may be a plain ground; you may be a forest; you may be a dale or a vale; when reighteous men live on you, you are righteous too".[5] In her effusion embodied in these lines the poetess emphasises on the truth that a land has no significance or meaning of its own unless it is peopled by men possessing unsullied morality, character and action.

We shall now see what Tolkāppiyar has to say about womanhood in his famous grammar. He states that a woman is guarded by the three great feminine virtues, "*Accam,*" "*Nāṇam*" and "*Maḍam*".[6] A woman's innate fear of hurt to her modesty is "*Accam*", Coyness and dissociation with anything that is incompatiable with womanhood is "*Nāṇam,*" and feigning ignorance even though a woman may be a repository of learning is "*Maḍam.*"

Tolkāppiyar further credits the womanhood with the virtues of Self-restraint, mental peace, uprightness, uttering cnly purposeful words, discrimination between good and evil, and unfathomable mind.[7] The grammarian defines the term "*Mādhar*" as love,[8] leaving us to infer that women are to be the objects of love. The norm that he sets for the conduct of women is, that sense of shame is superior to her love for her own life, and chastity, in its turn, surpasses the sense of shame in value.[9] At the same time he prescribes that fear of censure and sin and acquisition of knowledge are masculine virtues.[10]

A woman gifted with fascinating beauty of form, and the loveliness and charm attractive to males, was called "*Kārikai*". Women endowed with sufficient graces to win the love of men were called "*Mādhar*". Women who were pleasurable to all the five senses were said to possese "*Sāyal*". This particular characteristic of woman was capable of undoing the heroism of a man, according to a verse in Kuṟuntokai,[11] In this verse a woman's softness and grace is compared to water, and the might of man to fire.

Because women possessed softness and grace, they were called *"Melliyalār"* (frail persons). But women are endowed with enough strength and stamina to control their mind, keep it well balanced, and shun evil ways.

THE LOVELINESS OF FEMALE FORM

Women possessed liquid charms,[12] the swaying gait of a peacock,[13] and a physical body endowed with tenderness,[14] natural fragrance[15] and susceptibility to sallowness due to love languishes.[16]

Women possessed soft flowerlike eyes, arms comparable to round bamboo pieces and fascinating foreheads curved and shining like the moon a few days young.[17]

I invite you to an eyeful feast of feminine charms provided by a song in Kalittokai. Therein, the lover extols the beauty of his lady-love as follows. "O my love! you have arms like rounded bamboos; you have done your fragrant hair into five thrilling styles; your frightened look puts a fawn to shame; you have the gait of a peacock. The pebbles of your anklets tingling, the jewels you are wearing shedding their brilliance, do go to me swaying like a frail creeper, flitting like a streak of lightning and shining like a goddess. I stole a look at your waist so insubstantial as to be invisible to my eyes. In the city of wealty and affluence belonging to your father you have thrown your ball, with the throb of a youth, and have followed it here".[18]

The physical charms of his lady-love were sure to kindle the fire of love in the heart of the lover. Tolkāppiyar has prescribed ten dispositions that should exist between the young lovers. They are:Aptness in birth, status, virtues, conduct, knowledge, age, physical charm, manifestation of love-attainment of knowledge and wealth.[19]

Fascinating beauty of form causes the birth of the feeling of love between the lovers. Tolkāppiyar, speaks of lovers

possessing apt characteristics.[20] In *Poruḷiyal, Iḷampūraṇar* comments that these charms lead to their ultimate union.

The life time of a woman can be broadly divided into two periods. The first period relates to the life she leads with her parents upto her marriage, and the second is that she spends with her husband.

LIFE OF A WOMAN BEFORE THE MARRIAGE

There is ample proof in Sangam literature to the fact that heroism in war had been the chief characteristics in men. *Poṉmuṭiyār,* a Sangam poetess sings that a young man should find it his prime duty to destroy the enemy elephants on the battle-field and to return home victoriously.[21] Another verse in *Puranāṉūru* refers to the masculine virtue that a man was born to fight on the battle-field.[22] It speaks of yet another virtue, that he should surpass on the battle-field.[23]

As contrasted with these male characteristics, a woman was expected to be loving and graceous. The Tamil Community anxiously developed such a womanhood. An *Ainkurunūru* song bears evidence to this fact. It is a composition by *Kapilar,* a Brahman of unsullied character.[24] He has been praised for his morals even by his contemporaries, themselves.[25] In this song Kapilar says that the chief of the hilly country prayed to God and begged for a *daughter.*[26] It is an incontrovertible proof that during the Sangam period people had welcomed baby girls. The Modern Tamils feel it a great burden to bear and bring up female children. "What a contrast, gentleman! How far we have fallen from our ancient ideals!"

THE SPORTS OF YOUNG GIRLS

The Sports of young girls in the ancient Tamil society conformed to their tender age and limited capacity. They plucked flowers, plunged in tanks and rivers, rocked in

swings, threw balls, built sand-houses, and played with small balls in games like *"Ammāṉai."*

The *Kuriñji* girls drove away the birds that infested the *Tiṉai* fields with *"Tattais."* They knew how to string beautiful flower garlands too.[27] *Kapilar* mentions 99 varieties of flowers in *Kuriñjippāṭṭu*.

The young women were never melancholic; were always cheerful, were romping and lively. The little groups of girls indulging in sports and amusements were called *"Āyam"* or *"Orai Āyam." A Naṟṟiṇai* poet speaks disparagingly of giris who sulked in their houses without mingling with their companions in play and amusements. He says that sulking is not a correct conduct, and it will ruin their health. In his composition the maid-companion invites the lady-love to go with her and plunge in the milky, bubbling freshes of the river.[28]

Young ladies made dolls of a kind of kōrai grass and played with them.[29] Dolls were also made of pollin dust.[30] An innocent little girl suckles her doll with her immature breast.[31] The lady-love builds a toy house with her toy vessels and dolls.[32] There is yet another maid who, along with her girl friends, decks herself with a variety of jewels and engages herself in the performance of *'Tai Nōṉbu'* praying to be blessed with a suitable husband.[33] A little girl goes house to house singing, and distributes to the immates whatever gifts she had got from others.[34]

The *Neytal* girls frolic with the crabs on the sea-shore;[35] beatrice in the wooden mortars with pestles and string garlands of Vaḷḷi flowers.[36]

Ancient Tamil families, some of them, appear to have been so very affluent that the girls played with golden-balls standing on the sand-dunes.[37] Some girls played throw-balls with Molucca beans.[38]

The Tamil girls appear to have had a fascination for plunging in beautiful streams.[39]

EDUCATION OF GIRLS

The girls of the Sangam age were given a good training in literature, music and drama. The Sangam literature bears ample evidence to the fact that many women had distinguished themselves in the art of music. The education received by women was different from that imparted to men. Young men were taught the art of warfare, the ambassodorial assignments, town policing and various professions for earning a living. On the other hand the girls were given a good training in domestic science, to use the modern term. Even the mother liked only her educated son. Puṟanāṉūṟu says that a king followed the path prescribed by men of wisdom.[40]

The education imparted to the young men of the Sangam age was well designed to promote their physical health, balanced growth, and to fit them to their married life to follow. The girls got their instructions on the maintenance of their house-hold from their foster-mothers and lady-companions (the daughters of foster-mothers).[41]

The companion sits on the same side of the boat where the lady-love sits; and follows her during her sports in water.[42]

The preliminary instruction, a girl receives from her lady-friend and foster-mother blossoms into a full fledged knowledge in Iyal, Isai and Nāṭakam, even before she outgrows her adolescence.[43] Such a girl was called *"Mudukkuṟaivi."* In *Cilappatikāram, Kaṇṇaki* is hailed as a "Mudukkuṟaivi."[44]

More than fifty women have been ranked among the Sangam poets. Outstanding among the poetesses were: Añji Attai Makaḷ Nākaiyār, Aḷḷur Naṉ Mullaiyār, Ādi mandiyār, Uṭṭiyār, Uṉpittaiyār, Okkūr Māsāttiyār, Avvaiyār, Naṉṉākaiyār, Kākkaippāṭiṉiyār, Nacheḷḷaiyār, Kāvaṟpeṇdu, Kuṟamakaḷ Iḷa veyiṉiyār Nakkaṇṇaiyār, Neṭṭimaiyār,

Neṭumpalliyattai, Pāri Makaḷir, Pūnkaṇ Uṭṭiraiyār, Būdappāṇdiyaṉ Dēvi, Peruṅkōppeṇḍu, Pēymakaḷ Iḷaveyiṉi, Pottiyār, Pōndaippasalaiyār, Māṟokkattu Nappasalaiyār, Varumulaiyāritti, Veṇṇikkuyatttiyār, Veḷḷivīdiyār, Veṟi pāṭiya Kāmākkaṇṇiyār.

Of the above women poets *Avvaiyār* outshines as the most distinguished, one who could tender sage counsel even to mighty monarchs. *Kākkaippāṭiṉiyār* has contributed two works on prosody namely, *Kākkaippāṭiṉiyam*, and *Sirukākkaippāḍiṉiyam*, The most equisite and soul-stirring pieces contributed by the Tamil poetesses of Sangam period have been praised as the repositories of poetic excellence and fertile wisdom.

WOMEN'S KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC

By nature women were soft and tender, end their tone was sweet. They nursed the art of music as they nursed their babies, singing them lullaby songs. Even the beasts of the forests were charmed by the music of women. In one of the Sangam poems an interesting episode is related, A 'Kuṟava' girl sang the *'Kuriñci-p-paṇ,'* a melody native to the Kuriñci tract, so sweetly, that an elephant, which came to forage the well ripe ears of Thinai corn, was fascinared by the music and fell into slumber.[45]

When women sang the *Pālai-p-paṇ*, even the cruel hearts of the *Maravars* of the *Pālai* tract melted, and the hunting weapons slipped from their hands.[46]

It was not unusual for women to sing sweetly into the ears of their husbands and nurse their war wounds.[47]

Malaipaṭukaṭām, one of the ten Idylls, contains reference to such instances.[48]

GIRLS PRACTISING DRAMA

Dancing is an art in which the participants could express by physical signs the emotions which surge through their

hearts. The ancient Tamil women were well versed in this art too. A dancer who knew the art of physically expressing her emotions (Viṟal) was called a Viṟali. Malaipaṭukaṭām gives a graphic account of the accomplished Viṟalis who could dance to the mellow tunes of *Yāḻ*.

We shall now pass on to consider the life of *women led subsequent to their marriage.*

A little girl and a boy would have been quarelling with one another and would have pulled each other's hair even though their foster-mother tired to stop them. But later when these children grew up, and blossomed into youth, their hearts got locked up in love, and they appeared iike beautiful twin garlands. They marry and lead a happy life. Here, in the lives of these young persons. we see the fingers of fate moving. Those who have observed the life of this happy couple have blessed the "fate" for its contribution to their falicity. The entire drama is embodied in a short song by Mōtāsaṉār.[49] The stage setting now turns. We now witness a different drama. A young man and a girl meet together for the first time. Till this happy and accidental meeting they were strangers; yet they fall in love with one another. The lover addresses his lady-love in these words : "Your mother and father and my mother and father are not relativ es at all. Till this moment we too have not seen each other. The showers fall from the skies and mix with the red soil they soak into. Similarly we have now become inseparable ones."[50]

In the ancient Tamilagam, in most cases a short period of love preceded marriage. A girl would like to marry only the youngman whom she cared for. To achieve this purpose she would pray to her God offering Him flowers and incense. Poet Kapilar in one of his songs included in Aiṅkuṟunūṟu paints a beautiful picture of such a girl.[51]

GIRLS WHO OFFERED THEIR HEARTS TO THE WINNERS IN BULL FIGHTS

Young women born of Mullai tract would like to marry only those heroes who came out successful in bull fighting games. They never dream of marrying a coward who was afraid of the games.[52] Girls of long beautiful tresses could be won only by the heroes who had over-mastered the bull.[53] From these internal evidences we have to infer that bull-fighting and success in the fierce game was a condition precedent to a match between a young man and a young women of the Mullai tract.

In the ancient Tamil Society a huge amount was offered by the bridegroom's party for purchase of jewels for the embellishment of the bride. But a father would never agree to give his daughter in marriage to a young man, even though he had brought out very large gifts of wealth, if only he was otherwise ineligible to her hand.[54]

When once a lady-love elected to marry a youngman, she accepted him as her lord finally, and never rejects him later. A lady-love who had lost her heart to her lover feigns to be carried only away by fresh floods while she was sporting in the river along wirh her maid friends. The lover who, she know was in the vicinity, plunged in the stream, caught hold of the girl, hugged her to his bosom, and rescued her from her danger. Her parents and villagers decided to marry them, because their physical bodies united in contact, as did their hearts already. The maid friends of the lady love wonders how, at the apt moment, the lady could have called for rains at her command to bring freshes in the river.[55] In this context I am tempted to bring to your attention a parallel ideal embodied by Tiruvaḷḷuvar in his famous, oft quoted Kuṟal, "The Lady who worships no God but her husband could bid even untimely rains to fall."[56] As the Kuṟiñci girls marry only the suitor of their choice rains came in abundance and in time. And the Kuṟiñci men had plenty of

game for their food. What more; because of the chastity of the giris who worshipped no God than their husband, even her brothers could aim some arrows at rheir targets.[57]

The girls of Mullai tract also follow those of the Kuṟiñci girls in the practice of this matrimonial virtue. The Neytal girls do not lag behind in these high morals. A Mullai girl can never think of marrying any one other than her lover, even though she could have the world offered to her as prize."[58]

A Kuṟiñci lady-love decked her dark hair with the little string of flowers offered by her lover, but she is afraid of her mother and her reproach. Her lady-companian comforts her by these words :

> "He is the son of a shepherd; you are the daughter of a shepherd. You love him. Now where is the question for your mother rebuking you for the act? The heart of your mother is similar to yours, be assured."[59]

A poet of Kūṟuntokai has also confirmed in one of his verses the existence of the practice of love marriages, and none of other among the ancient Tamils.[60]

TOLKAPPIYAR'S REMARKS ON THE VIRTUES OF WEDDED WOMEN

Tolkāppiyar says that the transcendent virtue of a married women consisted of chastity, love, feminine patience, strength of mind, anxiety to entertain guests, love and generosity to relatives and many other good traits.[61]

The lady is the King-pin to the chariot of wedded life. The word "Illāḷ" in Tamil means "the governor of a house hold." The term "Maṉaivi" and "Maṉai Mutal" also denote a wife.

Bhāratiyār would like women to afford her fullest sympathy and co operation to all the household functions and charity of her husband.[62]

A woman who has united herself with her husband in ties of everlasting love is called "A woman of unswerving chastity" (ஒருமை மகளிர்)[63] and "life's companion" (வாழ்க்கைத்துணை)[64] by Tiruvaḷḷuvar.

The maid-companion informs the lover of the lady-love that even at the moment she met him for the first time she had mentally accepted him as her wedded lord and had been behaving as his wife.[65]

According to the first commentator of Aiṅkuṟunūṟu chastity does not commence with the marriage ceremonies but exists even during the period of courtship.[66] He avers that the lady commenced her wedded life even from the moment she fell in love with her lord. Dr. V. Sp. Manickam has explained that "Karaṇam" or "Caṭaṅku" represents the stage in which a girl gave up her virginity and entered into wedlock.[67] We have to presume that it was the occasion when the girl was given away in marriage to her lover.[68]

But the force of true love is as strong as destiny than, as it is now. When the lovers met with obstruction to their cause of love from their parents they could elope and marry clandestinely.[69] According to Tolkāppiyar marriage ceremonies had to be introduced later when, by passage of time, morals became loose.[70] On this statement of the grammarian Iḷampūraṇar comments thus : "Falsehood and loose morals appeared only after the deluge; during the period before the deluge, married life commenced without any open ceremony; and, after the deluge, marriage rites had to be introduced.[71]

Gentlemen ! Now I shall examine what were the characteristics and duties enjoined upon married life by the Tamils of the Sangam period.

Chastity : The term "Kaṟpu" has been defined variously. According to one definition, "Kaṟpu" denotes the path laid

by her husband whicha woman should follow in her married life. Some explain the term as "possessing the rocky strength of a moral purpose." "Nāṇam" is superior to one's life, and chastity surpasses "Nāṇam" in value—says Tolkāppiyar.[72]

Tiruvaḷḷuvar raises a mighty question, "what is more transcendent for a wife than the possession of stable chastity?"[73] The immortal author of Silappatikāram remarks through the mouth of Kavunthi Aḍikaḷ that chastity is an absolute necessity for women, and Kaṇṇaki is the only Goddess on earth possessing the mighty virtue and none-else.[74]

Love : Then we shall see what love meant to the ancient Tamil girls. Love is possession of a heart filled with an undying affection toward the lover. "The world cannot sustain without water.[75] My lord knows that, without him, I cannot live"—Wails a Naṟṟiṇai woman. Tiruvaḷḷuvar represents a lover as remarking that the relationship between him and his loved one is comparable to the relation between body and soul.[76]

The royal poet Peruṅkaṭuṅkō, who sang on Pālai tract asserts that, while exercise of a profession was the life of a man, to a woman, in her wedded life, her husband was her life.[77]

NOBILITY OF BIRTH

Character is behaving in conformity with the canons of right conduct prescribed for observance.

The husband of a lady who had been sporting with a harlot for somedays wanted to resume to the company of his wife after sometime, and sent a Pāṇaṉ as a messenger to negotiate peace with her. But the lady refused her husband entry into the household stating that she was not angry with him, but he was only eligible to be respected as her lord, and not share her amorous company.[78]

Another lady, whose husband returned to her after a few days stay with a harlot, said thus: "my husband's cruelty is unbearable. But I have to yield to him because I am born of a virtuous family."[80] We see how much, nobility of birth is valued by the lady. A woman did not fear death, but, she was afraid, that, if she died she would lose the company of her lord.[81] Another lady tells that even in the next birth the same must be her husband.[82]

When Kōvalaṉ abandoned Mādhavi and returned to the arms of her wife, Kaṇṇaki, and regretted his conduct toward her, she remarked "you had been leading a life of moral turpitude condemned by men of wisdom. But, I am a woman of immutable fidelity. Hence when you announced your wish to go to Madurai to eke out a living I agreed to accompany you to that city."[83]

A woman of virtue could not restrain her husband from pursuing loose morals, nor could she forsake him for it. She would be always faithful to him.[84]

Here is a picture painted by Bōdhaṉār—the picture of a girl, who had miserable turns in her fortunes in life, but still stuck on to the nobility of her character and birth. She was the child of rich parents. As a little child, she was offered food with milk in a golden cup by her foster-mothers, but would not eat, and giving them slip, hid herself under flower creepers. She grew up to maidenhood and loved and married. But, unfortunately, her husband fell into wants, and could not afford to provide a square meal to his wife. The father of the lady learnt of the plight of his daughter, and sent her sumptuous food from his own house. But the noble brith of the lady would not permit her to accept the dole. She elected to lead a life of poverty, denying herself alternate meals.[85] The long carridor of time now vanishes before our eyes. A domestic scene, painted by the poet two thousand years back, stands out in glare; and brings tears to our eyes. Here is another word-picture painted by another Sangam

poet. A young lady finds the water in the well in her husbands place, in which leaves rotted and animals drank, sweeter than a mixture of milk and honey in the garden of her birth place.[86]

PATIENCE

Forbearance is a virtue that springs from a tender heart. Tiruvaḷḷuvar rules that it is the prime duty of a person to put up with the taunts of others, just as the earth supports even those who dug deep into iṭ.[87] There is a separate chapter allotted in Tirukkuṟaḷ emphassing on the necessity of cultivating this supreme virtue. We could easily find that this virtue manifests itself in women, more than in men.

Even while the mother beats her child it cries "Ammā, Ammā." Similarly a lady will always yearn for the graces of her lover even though he might indulge in acts of cruelty toward her.[88]

Koṅkuvēḷir, the famous author of Peruṅkatai, the epic on which I am now carrying on my research, says that one born as a woman should put up patiently with the wrong doings of her husband that might even hurt her.[89]

The late poet Kambar describes in his own inimitable style the virtues of Sitạ. He says that the heroine of the great Kavya bore the characteristics of noble birth, and was the mainstay of patience and an embellishment of chastity.[90]

A later-day Avvaiyār advises woman to afford her husband a mother's protection, the services of a maid, the charms of Goddess Lakshmi, the embraces of a harlot, the counsels of a minister and the patience of earth.[91]

Nālaṭiyār, an eminent work on didactics included in the Patiṉeṇkīḻkkarakku anthology contains a poem in which certain rare virtues of a woman are counted. A woman should be fascinating to her husband, should act according to his restraint, and should learn when to indulge in petty quarrels with her husband, and, when to compose the differences.[92]

FIRM ADHERENCE TO A LIFE OF CHASTITY

Nacchiṉārkkiṉiyar, the eminent commentator of Tolkāppiyam defines "Niṟai" (unswerving adherence to life of chastity) as the virtue of not exposing to others, the troubles and travails a woman may be undergoing.[93]

A lady might be aware of the loose morals of her husband and the mental cruelty afflicted to her by him, yet, she would patiently bear with him,[94] and would not reveal his lapses and her troubles even to her maid.[95] Such was the high degree of chastity of the ancient woman of the Tamil society.

ENTERTAINING GUESTS

The arrangement of chapters in the "Illaṟa Iyal" in Tirukkuṟaḷ has a meaning and a purpose. It is not a haphazard setting. In the first chapter Tiruvaḷḷuvar defines life of a householder; in the next, he details with the virtues of the lifelong companion, the wife; in the next he extols the duty of giving birth intelligent and useful children; In the next chapter he deals with the love one should feel for other human beings; ultimately he emphasises on the duty of a house holder to receive and entertain guests cordially.

Tolkāppiyar has included entertainment of guests as one of the virtues of mistress of the household. He has defined "Viruntu" as "a thing that is quite new".[96]

The author of Silappatikāram has enjoined entertainment of guests as one of the important domestic duties of a person.[97] Kaṇṇaki bemoans the fate that had overtaken her on being abandoned by Kōvalaṉ in these words: "Alas! I have lost, in my life, the rare opportunity of giving gifts to men of wisdom, Anthaṇars, ascetics, and entertaining guests...."[98]

Sita laments while at Lanka, that what could her husband do without her when he had guests to entertain.[99]

The women of Sangam period would be very much happy to receive guests even at the untimely hours in the night.[100]

A lady calls the main gate of her house as "Palar puku Vāyil" (that is the door through which many used to enter).[101]

It was an admirable custom in those days to let in all the guests for the night, call out if there was any one left out, and then close the gate.[102]

Households have been glorified as places of inexhaustible resources wherein any one could get at any time a warm reception, and even a world of guests can find food and entertainment.[103]

The petty quarrels between the lord of the house and his wife used to be made up briefly in the presence of a guest.[104]

I need not tell you that, oven today, the guests often imes serve a similar purpose and sometimes the other way also.

Cherishing of relatives :

Nacchiṉārkkiṉiyar comments on what is to be cherished of relatives. The householder should first see that his friends, relatives, beasts of burden, men bearing weapons of war have had their food, and, then only he should proceed to satisfy his hunger.[105]

A girl was first trained to cook tasty food for her husband. A foster mother who happened to witness her daughter newly wed, feeding her husband, reported to the lady's mother as follows: "The girl crushed curds with her tender petal like fingers, spiced it with fried mustard seeds, the smoke from the spoon irritating her dark eyes, wiped her fingers on the cloth and forgot to wash the saree, served the dainty dish to her husband, and enjoyed her husband's words of praise for the delicacy."[106]

Bharatidasan also describes a similar scene in one of his poems [107] Kamban says that Sita Devi was cursing her fate with remorse that as she was being a captive in Lanka she could not provide her dear husband with tasty food.[108]

The lover would tell his loved one that even if she served him poison, it would be nectar to him,[109] A lady-companion recalls the endearing words of the lover spoke to his loved-one before marriage. He praised the margosa fruits given to him by his loved one as sheer delicacies made of jaggery.[110] A later composition, Tiruvengaikkōvai, also contains an allusion to a similar sweet and endearing comment of a husband.[111]

THE HEROISM OF TAMIL WOMEN

The heroism of women is called "Mūdiṉ Mullai" in Puṟapporuḷ Grammar. Women born of families dedicated to defence of their country were also called "Mūdiṉ Makaḷir". We find from Puṟanāṉṟu interesting evidences regarding the extraordinery valour and intrepedity displayed by women during times of war. A brave woman had the misfortune of losing her elder brother and husband on the battle field, She had only a young male child left to her. She called him, dressed him in white, dressed his tuft, put a lance in his hand and directed him toward the battle field. It is to be noted here that the famous poet who has given an account of this dauntless act of a Tamil mother is none other than Okkūr Māsāththiyār, a woman poet.[112]

WOMEN, THE LIGHT OF HOME

Women have been glorified in Tamil literature as the "lamp of home".[113] "A young woman sheds lustre to a home" says Nāṉmaṇi-k-kaḍikai.[114] It also negatively lays down that "A home is a void without a woman to run it."[115] Tiruvaḷḷuvar has stated that a man whose wife could not save the honour of her home could not walk boldly like a bull before his enemies.[116] A wife possessing all feminine virtues and homely cultures is an asset to a family.[117] An

accomplished wife illumines a home.[118] A poem in Pālai-k-kali contains in a nut-shell the philosophy of married life. It says that the husband and wife may be so indigent as to wear only a single piece of cloth and not a shred more, but they should live a united, inseparable life.[120] In Sangam literature we could find a young man and his wife leading a life of love and affection, being called "A bird with two heads and one soul."[121]

WOMEN AND WORSHIP OF GOD

Women of the Sangam period were devoted to God, and spent considerable time at home in worshipping Him.

Young virgins would go to Lord Murugan. They had already met their lovers in dreams. They now supplicated to Him to bring them and their lovers together in marriage in reality. Married women entreat the deity for blessing them with good children. Some lift their hands to Murugan to protect their husband in the exercise of his profession and also to bless him to meet with victory on the battle field.[122]

Married women offered worship to Siva, Māyōn, Murugan and other Gods. Ladies would hug their little ones to their bosoms, as they would the lotus blossoms, and would go to the temples along with their husbands carrying the Puja offerings like flowers and incense.[123]

The love, women cherished for their lords, was larger than the world, loftier than the skies and deeper than the seas.[124] A Sangam poet called "Tūṅkalōri" has alladmiration for a girl after whose marriage to a youngman, his poverty-stricken home began to fill with plenty and the family grew prosperous and happy.[125]

The hair of a person has not turned grey despite his advanced years. To inquisitive questioners, he discloses that the secret of his youth was his cultured and devoted wife at home.[126]

A loving wife would naturally disdain to prolong her life after her husband's death. Tiruvaḷḷuvar takes us to the bed chamber of a young couple where delicate drama is enacted. The husband promises not to leave her in the present birth. At once tears stream in the eyes of his wife. She cries, because she fears that she might get separated from in the future births.[127] Such was the great affection women possessed for their husbands.

Suttee was not widely prevalent in ancient Tamilagam. In some cases women committs suttee on the death of their husbands. Peruṅkōppeṇḍu, the wife of Bhūda-p-pāṇḍiyaṉ wanted to die on the funeral pyre of her husband. Men of wisdom around her entreated her to give up her decision. She refused to comply with their request and addressed them in these words: "O men of Wisdom! You ask me not to follow my husband but to live. You are wise but you have hurt me. You want me to eat rice mixed with Seasamum seeds and Vēḷai greens cooked with tamarind; you want me to sleep on hard, pebbled floor. Be assumed that I am not such a mean woman to live performing the "Kaimmai Nōṉbu." (widowhood.) The funeral pyre may be frightening to you. But to me, you should know, it appears as cool as a beautiful lotus pond."[128]

A woman very intensely in love with her husband, died immediately she heard of his demise. This was considered to be top class chastity. Some women burnt themselves to death along with the remains of their husbands Their affection was considered to be of the second sort. Many women chose to lead a life of widow with all the sufferings it entailed. Their affection was considered to be of the lowest. This information is furnished by Maṇimēkalai[129], an epic belonged to a later period.

Kōpperundēvi, who died the moment she saw her husband roll to his death, belongs to the first category. Bhūda-p-

pāṇḍiyaṉ's wife, who died on the funeral pyre of her husband, falls into the second category. Women who live widowed life relate to the lowest category of women.

The relationship that existed between a husband and wife is extraordinary and unique. To chaste women none can be compared to her husband.[130] Therefore, Kōpperundēvi left the mundane world along with her lord. The ancient Tamils raised monuments over the remains of women who committed suttee.[131] We have various instances of women dying on the funeral pyre of their husband in Puṟanāṉūṟu.[132] Āy Aṇḍiraṉ died. His wives died with him.[133]

The practice of committing suttee has continued during the medieval times according to the archaeological evidence.

The father of Tirunāvukkarasu Nāyaṉār died, and his mother at once committed suttee.[134]

Sundara Cholaṉ Parāntakaṉ II (957-970) died. According to the information contained in the Tiruvalaṅkāḍu copper plates his queen Vāṉavaṉ-Mā-Dēviyar committed Suttee.[135] Similarly Vīramā Devi, the queen of Kulothuṅga I committed herself to the flames that engulfed her husband's body.[136]

Women who chose to lead a widow's life were called "Āḷil Peṇḍir." (That is, they have no proper persons to protect them.)[137] These widows earned their livehhood by spinning. Hence they were called "Paruththippeṇḍir" (Cotton women).[138]

As the widows removed their jewels they were called "Kaḻi Kala Makaḷir" (கழி கல மகளிர்).[139] They also tonsured their heads. This practice appears to have been widely prevalent in many countries of the world in the olden days.[140] Western scholars are of the opinion that women cut off their hair to add to the strength to the departed.

Sir J. G. Fraser, while discussing the reason for shearing of locks as an offering for the dead, says "still it is to be remembered that in the opinion of some people, the hair is the special seat of its owner's strength, and that accordingly in cutting their hair and presenting it to the dead they may have imagined that they were supplying him with a source of energy not less ample and certain than when they provided with their blood to drink".[141] (Folk tales in the old Testament, P. IV. Ch. iv. p. 397).

The old Testament says that "virtuous woman is a crown to her husband".[142]

Gentlemen and Ladies! in concluding for the day I may say that the ancient Tamil woman was considered the loved one for her husband in early days, in the middle age his lif es companion, and his nurse in old age.[143]

The English poet Pope says :

"All other goods by Fortune's hands are given,
A wife is the peculiar gift of heaven".[144]

Another Poet Otwayn exclaims in raptures thus: "O woman, lovely woman, nature made thee to temper men, we had been brutes without you".[145]

There is a verse in the New Testament that says "giving honour unto the wife as unto the Weaker vessel".[146]

The love of the husband toward his wife must be sustained and ever tender. There should be no paucity in its course at all. Tiruvaḷḷuvar says that a husbandman should be continuously supervising his lands. Otherwise it will yield no return. He compares this attention and care to that he must bestow on his wife.[147]

He would consider no wealth superior to the acquisition of a good wife.[118]

Ingersoll thinks that if only a person would occupy woman's heart as her emperor, and if only she sits in his heart as his empress, he can be content to die a beggar in a gutte r.

The greatest bliss on the world is life of love and union of heart on the part of a husband and wife.[149]

Ladies and Gentlemen, with this I conclude my today's lecture. Thank you for your patiently bearing with me.

Tomorrow I shall be discussing the position of women and their status in detail during the glorious Sangam Age.

II

Revered President, learned Colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen and my young friends!

My yesterday's talk dealt with the characteristics virtues and the degree of culture attained by the womanhood of ancient Tamilagam. We have seen, how women were equipped culturally to fit themelves into the vicissitudes of life that confronted them in their youth, in their adult age, and in their old age

In today's talk I propose to discuss the high status and position they had occupied in the ancient Tamilagam.

It has been generally agreed to, by the scholars all over the world that the Tamil society is one of the most ancient societies in the world. Scholars who have given a shape to the Lemurian theory have always maintained that the present territorial portion of South India, and, a long stretch of land to the South of it, which submerged under deluges thousands of years back, have been the cradle of human civilisation. Father Heras has been maintaining that the civilisation of the Dravidians had dawned long long back, and that the civilisation, that prevailed in the Indo-Gangetic plain seven thousand years back, was definitely that of the Dravidians. He says that "being Dravidians, the inhabitants of Mohenjo Daro and Northern India naturally spoke a Dravidian language."[1] Puṟapporuḷ veṉpā Mālai, a latter composition exults the fact that the Tamil Community was born "when rocks appeared on the face of the earth and sand was not yet formed."[2] It is such an ancient ore. In this context it will be interesting to consider that, of all the women belonging to the ancient civilisation all the world over, the Tamil women had been enjoying certain higher status, privileges and freedom in life. Thiru V. Kanakasabai Pillai says in his

pioneer book "Tamils one thousand eight hundred years ago" that the Tamil women "mixed freely, though modestly, in tha business and amusements of social life."[3] Thiru K. A. Nilakanta Sastri has remarked in his book "The History of the Tamils and their Culture" that women of the ancient Tamilagam enjoyed considerable privileges, and that may many poetesses distinguished themselves in the literary field.[4]

Thiru. V Kalyanasundaranar, who was one of the heralds in Tamil Nadu to have raised the standard of independence of women early in this century, says: "It is not an exaggeration to assert that the ancient Tamilagam was a symbol of independent womanhood. This fact can be substantiated by any amount of evidence collected from the ancient Sangam works. None, in those days, felt that woman was inferior, less equipped, and a slave to man. What is it that stands in relief in all the Sangam Works? Is it not the pleasure of home? How can there be enjoyment when there is no independence? The very manifestation of independence is nothing but pleasure. The lover and his loved-one should have been equally placed in their enjoyment of domestic pleasure. There were no disparities of any sort between them. Both of them enjoyed equal privileges and equal status. The characteristics and accomplishments of both the lover and his loved-one should be balanced and matched. According to Nachiṉārkkiṉiyar the lover and the loved-one should function as the pair of horns adorning the head of a cow. The ancient Tamils practised love marriages. The very fact that a girl could select her own lord is a proof positive for the large amount of freedom enjoyed by women."[5]

Prof. M. Varadarajanar, the Vice chancellor of Madurai University writes in his book "Peṇmai Vāḻka" (பெண்மை வாழ்க), as follows:- "During the period called "Sangam Age"—that is the period prior the 2nd Century A. D. Tamil Nadu had attained a very high status in political, social and

commercial spheres. A study of the literature of those days would amply prove that the women enjoyed a good deal of esteem and respect. More than thirty women poets have flourished at various times in the ancient Tamilagam. There have been poetesses like Avvaiyār who had the privilege of being employed on ambassodorial duties. Royal Ladies like the wife of Bhūda-p-pāṇḍiyaṉ were erudite scholars. Women well accomplished in the acts of music and drama have been living in every town. In many other fields women distinguished along with men to a considerable degree."[6]

Dr. V. Sp. Manickam who has made a special study of the condition of women of Sangam period, emphasises that "The woman of the ancient Tamil Society had the privilege to seek for educational equipments, to compose poems, to love and marry, to rebuke her lover, to pursue her domestic functions without any hindrance and to command a status in all these equal to men."[7]

Dr. K. K. Pillay has observed in his "Social history of the Tamils:—Vol. 1—that "women were treated with consideration in view of their comparatively weaker physical capacity and power of resistance."[8]

Dr. N. Subramaniyam declares that "the position of women of Sangam age was not as it is today; and at the same time, it was not widely different from the one as it obtains today."[9] In one of his articles he further states that "the Sangam Society from the point of view of the sexes, was not an egalitarian Society, and the men granted a markedly inferior status to their women, who consciously or by habit accepted that position. There was no contemporary demand for a revision of that status on philosophical or even practical grounds, and, till recently, that position has remained without appreciable change."[10]

Jawaharlal Nehru, remarks in his "Discovery of India" as follows: "The legal position of women according to Manu, the earliest exponent of the law, was definitely bad. They

were always dependent on somebody-on tha father, the husband or the son. They were treated in law almost as chattels. And yet from the numerous instances in the Epics this law was not applied very rigidly and they held an honoured place in the home and in society. Bad as the legal position of women was in ancient India, judged by modern standards, it was far better than in ancient Greece, and Rome; in early Christianity, in the canon law of medieval Europe; and, indeed, right upto comparatively modern times at the beginning of the nineteenth century.''[11]

Thirumathi K. Gnanambal states in her book on "Home life among the Tamils in the Sangam Age" that "woman is the fountain head of love. She was free, independent and the equal of man, and she was treated with uniform courtesy and respect. She was not a mere household beast of burden. She was indispensable and the vital half of man. She was held in reverence and adoration in the Tamil Land of the Sangam Age."[12]

We shall now see how far the remarks of the scholars and historians quoted above are supported by Sangam classics.

Yesterday, we saw how the lover and his loved-one should agree in birth, nobility, capacity, age, personal charms, affection, humility, grace, wisdom and wealth.[13] The couple who possesses all these ten characteristics are called by Tolkāppiyaṉār "Oththa kiḻavaṉ and kiḻaththi" (ஒத்த கிழவனும் கிழத்தியும்)[14]

The degree of civilisation a society has attained can be very well understood from the words of the language spoken. Language never lets down a civilisation.

It is a peculiar excellence and sublimity of the Tamil language that the words "தலைவன்-தலைவி", "காதலன்-காதலி and "கிழவன்-கிழத்தி" have found their usage in it.

A young man and a young woman established in a life of love and affection were not only called man and wife, but

they were also "Thalaivaṉ" and "Thalaivi" which appellations connote that they had been endowed with equal position and honour in the society. Because they shared their privlieges equaliy they were called "Kiḷavaṉ". (he who had rights) and "Kiḷaththi" (she who had rights). Love manifests itself in the rights and freedom enjoyed by both of them."[15]

In the West, women, after their marriage, lose their birth identity. They take the name of their husbands. Such a practice indicative of inferior status of women does not obtain in this country.[16] Here the women continues to bear her maiden name even after her marriage.

Tolkāppiyaṉār would permit marriage between a young man and a young woman even though he may be superior to the lady in certain respects, which may be, according to Nachchiṉārkkiṉiyar, parentage, education, age, etc.

The practice of a young man marrying a lady elder to him is not prevalent in Tamil Nadu. A woman matures and grows much more early than a man. The life time of women was divided into seven catagories, Pēdai (பேதை) to Pēriḷam peṇ (பேரிளம் பெண்). The upper limit of the last category Pēriḷampeṇ is forty years. It has been considered a natural virtue that a person who loves a woman should continue to protect her even in her old age.

A lady companion (தோழி) of the loved-one arranges for her elopement with her lover, and, at that time, commands the lover not to forsake the girl even when she grows old, her firm round breasts sag, and the long lustrous tresses grow grey."[17]

Bharatidasan in one of his poems says: "Her body is not soft like a newly opened blossom; it is like a bundle of grass; she no more walks with a dancing gait; she totters while she walks; her face does not shine like the full moon any more; it is like a withered piece of land; her eyes are dark pits.

None of these changes afford me comport. It is only the thought that "she is yet alive" that gives me contentment."[18]

The characteristics and functions of a male are in many ways different from those of a female. Tolkāppiyaṉār lays down that nobility of birth and physical and mental strength are made virtues.[19]

Nachchiṉārkkiṉiyar defines nobility of birth (பெருமை) as including the characteristics of wisdom, strength, fame, generosity, faculty of discrimination, culture, friendliness, and avoiding sin and shame. He further defines "Uraṉ" (உரன்) as an inflinching stand against odds and the faculty of coming to right decisions in difficult situations.[20]

Tolkāppiyaṉār assigns the characteristics fear, shyness, and reservation to women.[21] Nachchiṉārkkiṉiyar defines 'Achcham" (fear) as the one that is born out of affection; 'Nāṇam" (shyness) as the self restraint natural to women during love advances, and "Maḍam" as the continued compliance with the counsels of the lady-companions.

Shyness (Nāṇam) is a greater virtue than love of life; and chastity surpases Nāṇam,[22] Above all the feminine virtues are enlarged to include humility, self restraint during amoros moments, an unbending mind, exquisitiness of expression and manners when in the act of wooing, a knowledge of good and bad, and the power of asserting it; and depth of mind.[23]

We find here that the virtues of a woman conform to her physical limitations and capacity.

The ancient Tamils called love and marriage "Aham" (அகம்). The terms "Aham" can be interpreted to mean both the mind and the house. Dr. Rev. Thani Nayagam finds that of all literatures dealing in love episodes of youngmen and women all the world over, the "Aham treatment in Tamil Grammar is the most outstanding and incomparable."[24]

He further states that if any one has declared that a particular individual has fathomed the feminine mind better than Shakespeare he should be either an ignoramus or a great scholar.[25] As the Sangam poets have assessed women's mind as no others have done, they have to be deemed to be great men of wisdom,

The literary places designated as Sangam literature include Paththuppāṭṭu and Eṭṭuththogai anthologies and consist of 2381 verses on the whole. Of these verses 1862 relate to Aham topics. Naṟṟiṇai contains 500, Paripāḍal 8, Kaliththogai 149, Ahanāṉūṟu 400, and Paththuppāṭṭu 4.

Most of the Aham songs revolve around the lady-love. The actors who take part in the thrilling dramas of the Aham life are Thalaivi (தலைவி). Thalaivaṉ (தலைவன்), Thōḻi (தோழி), Sevili (செவிலி), Nāṟṟāi (நற்றாய்), and Pāṅgaṉ (பாங்கன்). The Aham songs most of them, portrays the warm feelings of love, the throbbings of expectation and mental ecstasy etc, of the loved-ones.

Dr. V. Sp. Manickam concludes his article with the following words: A literature, the object of which is the treatment of general behaviours of human beings, cannot but show respect for women in general. Indeed in the Sangam epoch, there was no superiority or inferiority of sexes. The Tamils regarded man and woman as two different beings of the class "உயர்திணை" or rational beings. They, as the Greeks did, entrusted the management of the family and the bringing up of children to women, while outside came to be responsibility of man. Monogamy and chastity were strictly enjoined on women for the uninterrupted continuation of family life, and for the procreation of good and pure progeny. Thus society depended upon and consciousness of women of their responsibility for its stability and existence."[26]

I shall now proceed with the songs, the themes of which fall into Aham type: These poems declare unequivocally the

extraordinary measure of freedom, women enjoyed in the domestic and social set up.

"An interesting information is furnished by a 'Kuriñci-k-kali' song. "The parents of a young girl who has already fallen in love with a young man have been proposing her in marriage to another one. The 'Thōḻi' is anxious to see that the 'Thalaivi' is not forced by circumstances to lose her virtues. She would very delicately disclose her friend's love to her mother either impliedly or openly. The mother will reveal the information to her husband and sons They might spend a day or two in irritation and disappointment; but finally after careful consideration agree to the girl's selection. When the parents after sufficient enquiry found out that their daughter had after all accepted a suitable, eligible young man as her lover, they were ashamed of their anger and hung their heads in shame."[27]

The tact and ingenuity displayed by the Thōḻi (lady companion) in her recommendations of the choice of the lady love are applaudable. She tells the parents of the girl stricken with love that a young man had saved her from being carried away by floods while bathing in a river, that while she was being rescued by him her young breasts crushed against his embrace, that she, at that very ecstatic moment decided to love him and accept him as her lord, and hereelf as his wedded wife, and that she could not sacrifice her chastity by being married to another person. She further warns the parents of the girl that if the people of the Kuriñci village decided against the dear wishes of the girl a curse will strike the mountain side. The Vaḷḷi creeper will not yield tubers; the bees will not build their fat hives; the ear of the Thiṇai corn will be very thin. The Kuriñci girls have never swerved from the path of virtue. Because they worship their husbands as the lord of their hearts, even their brothers enjoy the uncanny gift of aiming faultless arrows on their quarries.

But for the tireless efforts of the "Thōḻi" (lady companion) the lady-in-love would not have married the young-man who had been the object of her affections and care.

In another Kuṟunthogai song we learn that when the relatives of the lover approached the parents of the loved-one asking her hand in marriage to the same young man, the lady in love enquires inquisitively her maid friend whether her parents had signified their acceptance of the match.[28] She is being assured by the lady companion that they had consigned her to the rightful ownership of the lover.[29]

On this poem Dr. U.V. Swaminatha Ayyar comments as follows: Of all the persons and things that are owned by a person the wife claims a special position and status. Hence she is said to have been consigned to the rightful ownership of the lover.[30]

It was the practice in those ancient days to send elderly emissaries to ask for the hand of the loved-one at the instance of the lover. As these messengers were instrumental in bringing together these lovers in marriage they were called the "Agents" who made the young couple to speak together in marriage.[31]

A young man and his lady-love had eloped. The foster mother of the girl searches for her in the cruel grim palai-tract. She had rambled far and wide. She was dead tired and could walk no more. She saw many couples on her path going or coming hand in hand. Not one of them was the one she had been in search after. The lady companion wonders that those who have been eloping count more than the stars in the wide skies.[32]

It is a pleasant surprise for the Tamils of the 20th century to learn from those literary records that their ancestors practised elopement so very widely.

Here is another instance of elopement. A lady-love elopes with her lover and they both proceed along the hot

Palai tract. The foster mother goes in search after the missing couple. On her way she meets with Tiridaṇḍi Sanyasis (திரிதண்டி சந்நியாசிகள்). She hails them, and asks them if they had seen a young girl, her own daughter, and a young man the son of another woman, who had loved one another walking together.

The reply given by the Sanyasis is the most interesting piece of information that has gone in Tamil literature as a priceless literary gem. The more it has been quoted the more lustre it has gathered. Well, this is their reply.

"O venerable mother. You may return home happily. We did behold a handsome youngman in the company of a beautiful girl; you should be proud of being the mother of the girl who had the strength of heart to follow her lord in these terrible Palai tracts The Sandal tree is born on the slopes of mountains. But it givee pleasure to those who smear its rubbings on their chests and not to the mountains. Your daughter is likewise too.

The priceless pearls though born of the deep sea are of no use to the place of their birth, but are worn with pleasure by persons knowing their value. Your daughter is also a pearl to you but valuable to her lover.

The sweet music arising from the seven strings of a yāḻ (யாழ்) is enjoyable not by the yāḻ but only by a listener. So also daughter is of exquisite value not to you but to her lover only.

Therefore, O mother, do not feel sorry for the elopement of your daughter. Do not pursue her any futher, she is a gem of chastity. She has gone away in the company of her lover. What she has done is accepted by canon of feminine virtues and moral law.[32]

The women of ancient Tamilagam knew and appreciated the value of their married status. They had understood that they had more to do with the duties of their husband's homes than singing the glory of their parents' houses.

They had realised that the life in their husband's house was natural and a part of feminine virtues.

"We have already seen how the parents, the neighbours, the sages and the hero bowed their heads in reverence to the noble quality of chastity. We have also seen that a girl after her association with a youth keeps her loyalty at all costs, even disregarding her parents and experiencing any amount of hardships. Therefore the main figure in Ahaththiṇai (அகத்திணை) around which all other figures revolve and the chief quality to which all other qualities are attached are the heroism and her chastity,"[53]

The Aham songs inform us that the practice of the bridegroom paying a price for the hand of the girl he was marrying existed largely in Tamilagam. A poem in Aiṅkuṟunūṟu states that a lady companion happily assures the lady love that her lord has assigned her parents his very kingdom in return for her hand.[54] The old commentator of the anthology goes a step further and says that the youngman wanted to gift the entire world to her loved one, but as that was not possible, he parted with his country.

The Āyar's (shepherds) did not value the bride price (breast) Price or (முலைவிலை) very much. But they valued the high valour of a young man who could plunge in between the two sharp horns of a bull, as he would in between the breasts of his love, and bring it under control in the bull fighting sports[55] Two verses in Akanāṉūṟu[56] bear evidence to the practice of receiving brideprice.

A lover, resident of the Neydal tract thinks within himself thus :-

> "My love is a most beautiful one. She is too valuable a gift that I can obtain even though I could exchange boat loads of the best wealth possess in return for her.[57]

From the instances quoted above we have to infer that during the Sangam period girls were considered as pieces of

property owned by a person. Contrary to this practice in modern Tamil Nadu bridegrooms insist on receiving large sums of money as Sridhanam from the bride's parents.

The entry of a bride into her husband's house hold as an important member thereof is hailed as a fortunate occasion.[38] Instances have been quoted which reveal that a household, that was being carried on the mere pittance obtained from the sale of a single cow's milk, now after the auspicious arrival of the bride has blossomed into one of fairs and festivities.

We may recall, in this connection the proverb, widely circulated in Modern Tamil Nadu, which says "what can do he plougher? The fortune follows the woman who handles his cooking utensils." (ஏர் பிடித்தவன் என்ன செய்வான்; பானை பிடித்தவள் பாக்கியம்)

But all bride prices however much sumptuous they might have been, have not fetched the brides. There have been cases when parents have refused to give their daughter in marriage to a young man inspite of his offer of valuable gifts as he was otherwise ineligible to her.[39]

Sometimes the lover would go out to earn enough bride money to be offered to his loved-one. The marital act the bridegroom locking his hand with that of his bride was called "Koḍai" (கொடை).[40]

IN THE LOVE-LIFE OF IN THE SETTING
(BACKGROUND OF THE FIVE TRACTS OF LAND)

A loved one exalts the love she bore toward her lord as large than the world, deeper than the seas and loftier than the skies.[41]

Another young girl in love asserts that though her lover had not yet pleasured her she feels ecstatic by merely keeping on looking at him.[42] A loved-one finds comfort in her lover's wiping her tears and whispering words of endearment into her ears.[43]

There is a species of water-birds called "Mahanril" (மகன்றில்). The mating couples always keep together closely. As they float about swimming on the streams even if a flower used to pass in between them. they will consider the interference several years long. Similarly a lady love laments for her separation from her lord, though it might have been only a momentary one.[44]

One lady love questions whether she will feel happy at home while her lord will feel insecure and meet with dangers in the forests if he leaves her for a while on any mission.[45]

A woman declares that the husbands are the life and soul of young women who live at home [46]

A lady companion (தோழி) is surprised at the tiny spark of life in the lady-love bearing the huge love for her lord even as a tiny twig stands supporting the big jackfruit.[47]

These affectionate and amorous experiences and expressions of the lady-love are reciprocated by the lovers also. A lover declares that the liquid charms of his loved one have extinguished his fiery tempers.[48] Anothor would never lose the affections of his loved one even though he might be offered in exchange the whole world surrounded by the seas [49] Yet another one thinks that the days spent in sleeping with his love are the most useful one, and the other days are futile.[50]

Here is another lover who would be happy to spend a single happy, pleasant day with his lover, and he does not want even half a day longer.[51] A lover in Paṭṭiṉappālai refuses to get separated from his loved-one even though he may be offered the entire city of the flourishing Kāviri p-pūm-paṭṭiṉam.[52]

THE LOVE THAT DOES NOT WEAROUT

A young woman says that her husband continues to show her the same love and affection which he exhibited at

the time of their marriage.[63] Another lady is very happy that the affections of her lord have actually increased since their marriage.[64]

In these instances one could see a thread of a philosophical import running through. As the married life of the young couple advances the physical attraction slowly wears out, but the union of their hearts gathers strength step by step,

THE LAMP OF THE HOME

We have already seen that because a woman adds illumination to a home she is called the lamp of the home (மனைக்கு விளக்கு) because a woman rules over the hearth she is called the ruler of the house (இல்லாள்) because she is the head of the house she is called the "Maṉai Mutalvi ' (மனை முதல்வி), and because she constituted life's inseparable campanion she was called "Vāḻkkaith Thuṇaivi" (வாழ்க்கைத் துணைவி).

There are no comparative male appellations such as "Illāṉ" (இல்லான்), "Maṉaivaṉ" (மனைவன்), or "Maṉai Mudhalvaṉ" (மனை முதல்வன்) in Tamil language.

The back portion of the houses was considered a place of importance, because it is presided over by the lady of the house, and it was the main entrance to the house, because the front portion of the house, where the men-folk sojourned was considered less important when compared to the back portion. This fact is borne out by literary evidences Well, here is an evidence The famous author of 'Siṟupāṇāṟṟuppaḍai' gives us a life-like description of the family of a Pāṇaṉ struck by chill penury and suffering from indigence and want, says the author—"Little puppies which have not even opened their eyes yet are suckling the dry nipples of their mothers, and they are crying of anquish because no milk comes; the strings which kept the bamboo rafters bound with the roof of the house are worn out and cut into

pieces, the fireplace in the kitchen which has not seen fire for a long time has fallen into disuse. It is infested with fungus. It has become a place for dogs to sleep. The lady of the house with her body withered due to interminable fire of hunger, with a lean waist and with emaciated bangled arms plucks little heads of vēḷai (வேளை) greens, found grown on the dust heap, with her nails and cooks them without salt. The lady was shy that unscrupulous persons, ignorant of the fact that poverty was but a natural occurrence, could talk low of her. She therefore hurries to the "kaḍai" (கடை) shuts it and shares the poor fare with her starving relatives.[65] Here the terms "shut the kaḍai" has been interpreted by Nachchiṉārkkiṉiyar as "shut the Thalaivāsal" (main entrance).

WOMEN AND CHASTITY

In the Sangam works a woman is always spoken of along with her chastity. We have references to "a good woman who, distinguished for her divine virtue of chastity, has acquired additional censideration by begetting a good child which shines like a lamp in the house,[66] and then again to a woman with the assets of chastity and a lustrous forehead."[67]

Women are praised in the Sangam literature as always uttering sweet and useful words, as possessing beautiful red mouths yielding the divine nectar and as blessed with beautiful eyes, lustrous forehead and a swaying gait.[68]

Women are always referred to as மங்கல மகளிர்,[69] மனையோள்,[70] வெய்யோள்,[71] வசையில் மகளிர்,[72] மெல்லியல் மகளிர்,[73] சேயிழை மகளிர்.[74] They are also described as exemplary women whom even Arundadhi worshipped.[75] Here again I shall like to echo the words of my learned Professor Dr. Varadarajanar. He says that—"No other language than Tamil language contains literary works glorifying the freedom of women. To doubt the fidelity of one's wife was considered the height of ons's foolishness

(கயமை). This foolishness does not find a place in Tamil literature. But it can be found in the works of ether languages including English. But the Aham works always refer to the Lady suspecting the fidelity of her lover or husband. That is why the stature of women is found raised in Tamiḻaham. That is why the women were called "Nallār" (நல்லார்).[66]

PETTY CONJUGAL QUARRELS AND THE PRIVELEGES OF WOMEM (ஊடல் உரிமை)

We come across many instances of petty quarrels between the husband and wife in the treatment of Marudattiṇai (மருதத்திணை) in Tamil literature.

A marudam woman, angry at her husband returning to her from the house of a harlot, asks him wildly "who asked you go over here?"[67] Another lady aggressively questions "How are you related to us? You are a big man. I am trembling with sorrow and suffering. Am I your wife? Get away from me."[68] A third woman retorts in a rage "who are you that comes here and touches my tresses. It is cruelty on your part. Do not go to my house. Return as you came."[69] Another woman of certain amount of tragic humour remarks: 'O, you who enters into my house! Who are you? I knew you. You always appear in marriage embellishments, even as a honey bee endlessly search for nectar from blossom to blossom."[70]

The lady has been head of the domestic establishment. The house belongs to her. She always refers to it as "my house." Whereas, the husband never calls it as "his house." The exalted position which the Sangam women claimed for themselves is perhaps due to their unflinching virtue of chastity, strength of mind and a sense of righteousness.[71]

It has been always considered a great privilege to be born in a family characterised by these virtues and culture.

Hence a woman is eulogised as possessing the highest quality of chastity,[72] and, as godly enough to be worshipped by even Arundati, the northern star.[73]

MEN AND CHASTITY

Poet Bhāratiyār has called the virtue of chastity the common property of woman as well as man.[74]

Some scholars have considered that during the Sangam period only women were required to be chaste and not men. I am afraid they have not perhaps perused the poem of Chōḻan Nalaṅkiḷḷi (சோழன் நலங்கிள்ளி). He raises words of vengence and declares: If they go to me in supplication and humility I shall give away to them not only my Kingdom, but also my life, Whoever taunts foolishly my valour shall suffer destruction like a blind man who steps on the tail of a reposing tiger. Like a bamboo shoot bent at the foot of an elephant I shall pursue my enemy upto his own place and destroy him. If I fail in what I have declared, let me embrace loveless public women and let my garland fade away."[75]

If a Chola monarch could have praised the male chastity so much, how much value ordinary folk would have placed on it, we have only to imagine and estimate.

Ollaiyūr Thantha Bhūdappāṇḍiyaṉ (ஒல்லையூர் தந்த பூதப் பாண்டியன்) had an occasion to declare thus:—

> "I will inflict crushing defeat on my enemies who may spring on me like the raging lions. If I fail in my efforts, I shall sever myself from the company of my wife."[76]

Because this monarch was so much attached to his wife, she decided upon committing suttee on his death, which I referred to in my talk yesterday.[77] Because some scholars are of the opinion that the practice of "Suttee" shows the state of slavery of women of those period.

LOVE OF ANIMALS

We find in one of the Kurunthogai songs a depiction of manifestation of love among animals too. The maid-companion entreats the lover not to meet his lady love in night trysts; but to marry her as early as possible.

In that connection she recalls to a mind of the lover certain traits observed in mountain monkeys She says: "The male monkey is dead. Its mate, a beautiful animal, could not bear a lonely widowed life. The young one in her arms is too tender to climb the trees and seek for food. Therefore, the female monkey hands over the young one to the care of its relatives and rolls down the slopes of a high his to death. You are the chief of the hill where such virtue is being displayed even by irrational beings. Do not go to your love during night hours, We are all afraid very much that some danger may overtake you on your way. Blessed by you."[78]

THE FOLLY OF LUSTING FOR ANOTHER'S WIFE

Selva-k-kaḍuṅgō Vāḷiyādaṉ (செல்வக்கடுங்கோ வாழியாதன்) is the hero of the poem forming the seventh decade of Padhiṟṟuppattu sung by Kapilar. He attributes to the monarch the rare virtue of exposing his chest to none but his own wives.[79]

Tiruvaḷḷuvar exalts the male chastity to a very high rank, He calls the virtue the summation of manhood not yielding to the temptations of looking at another person's wife with amorous intentions.[80]

Though it might not been possible for a person not to tread the path of righteousness in his life, his life would yet be a straight one, if only he does not covet his neighbour's wife.[81]

But there has been a black sheep also among the ancient Tamil kings. Bēgaṉ (பேகன்), a chieftain abandoned his wife Kaṇṇaki, embarked on a loose life, and, for that act of

loneliness and contempt, poets like Kapilar,[82] Paraṇar,[83] Arisil Kiḻār,[84] and Peruṅkuṉṟūrkiḻār[85] have raised their hands in reproach.

In the course of domestic life certain occasions are bound to arise when the husband would have to aubmit to his wife simply without any remonstrance. Such occasions will arise during the course of conjugal differences according to Tolkāppiyaṉār.[86]

The wife is sulking. Her husband is trying to humour her. His wife asks him not to waste his precious time and not be uttering lies to her. She asks him to go and tempt any lady who would listen to him. The lord says: "My dear girl unless you direct your gracious glance upon me I shall not live." From this instance we have to infer that it is the husband, who may sometimes swerve from the path of virtue, and never the wife; and, that, during the times of conjugal quarrels the husband will abjectly submit to his wife.[87]

Sometimes the husband may fall flat at fhe feet of his wife. She will remonstrate that his conduct was bad, and that it may give an occasion to his harlot friends to laugh at him. We find such instances related in later Tamil works.[88]

A Kuṟunthogai verse relates an incident involving a harlot. She say that the lover was acting as if he surrendered, himself to her absolutely, but after returning to his wife he is behaving as though he was a mere image in a mirror moving its limbs.[89]

Tolkāppiyaṉār calls chastity the right of a woman much to be admired and feared by others.[90] According to Nachchiṉārkkiṉiyar, a wife engaged in running a home during her married life, possesses the capacity of domestic management, generosity to give to others, and mighty virtue of chastity.

Tolkāppiyaṉār denies the right of women accompanying their husbands to battle-fields.[91]

Pāṇdiyaṉ Neḍuñcheḻiyaṉ was embarked on his war actions. He continued to fight even when the fierce cold north wind commenced to blow,

Before starting an attack on the enemy, a warning used to be proclaimed by the raiding King. He will ask cattle, Andhaṇars, women, sick people, those who had not begotten any children to be removed to a safer place. Similarly Kaṇṇaki, before she proceeded to consign Madurai to flames by the curse, commanded that the God of fire should not harm Andhaṇars, men of renunciation and wisdom, chaste women, elderly people and children, but he should consume only evil doers.[92]

NANNAN WHO MURDERED A WOMAN

Killing a woman was considered a most heinous and abominable crime.[93]

A young woman went to a stream to bathing. A mango fruit belonging to Naṉṉan, a chieftain, was coming floating on the stream. Not knowingly it belonged to Neṉṉaṉ, the girl ate the fruit. Naṉṉaṉ was angry and killed her, even though, gold equal to her weight and eighty one bull elephants, were offered to him in compensation of the loss of the mango fruit. Hence Naṉṉaṉ fell headlong into the hell for the crime of killing a woman.[94]

The old commentator of Puṟanāṉūṟu states, that because of Naṉṉaṉ's detestable crime his descendants were all excommunicated by men of wisdom.[95]

During the Sangam period Kosars noted for their wisdom and truthfulness were inhabiting in various places in Tamiḻaham. They got very angry at the outrageous crime of Naṉṉaṉ, cut down his totem tree and wreaked their vengence on Naṉṉaṉ's Kingdom.[96]

WOMEN PROHIBITED FROM THE EXTREME ACT OF EXHIBITION OF LOVE CALLED "MADALERUTHAL."

Whatever calamity might occur, women were not eligible to perform the act of "Maḍalēṟuthal".[97] There have been

references in Sangam works to the threats of lovers to perform the extreme act, if they did not win their loved-ones. But there has not been even a single instance of a person having performed the act, or of having lost his life thereby.

Tolkāppiyaṉār lays down that, as a rule, a young man does not take with him his loved-one on high seas.[98] Perhaps the young man was anxious that his lady-love should not undergo the troubles and travails as he would be subject on sea voyages.

CHILDREN

Tiruvaḷḷuvar says that a woman of virtue is an auspicious possession of a family; and that good children are ornaments of the family.[99]

The wife adds a glow to the home. Her children make her glorious. Iḷanāgaṉār (இளநாகனார்), a Sangam poet extols the virtues of a wife who has given to the family a good progeny.[100] Ālaṅguḍi Vaṅgaṉār, another poet blesses women who are chaste and bring forth good children.[101]

In Marudam Tiṇai poems we find that it is the son who brings together his father and mother, who had quarrelled on account of the loose morals of the former.

The husband spends the whole day in the company of a harlot, but returns home for the night. Not minding the rebukes of his wife he hugs his little boy to his bosom and feion going to bed. The enraged wife orders him out of the house and not to touch her son. But the culprit tells her that the boy bears the name of his father, and he would hug him, and that mattered nothing for her.[102]

A poem in Akanāṉūṟu describes a similar event.[103]

THE SPORTS OF YOUNG WOMEN

Women practised "Thuṇaṅgai Dance"[104] (துணங்கைக் கூத்து) when the season for the entertainment arrived.[105]

They would play the first round with the person they loved.[106]

The Tamil women exhibited extraordinary pleasure in bathing in ponds and streams.[107] This sport is described not only in Sangam literature but also in later Purānās. Before their marriage, the women of Sangam age were accompanied by their maid-companions to plunge in water, and after their marriage their husbands took the places of the lady companions (தோழிகள்). The young women appear to have been endowed with a large amouut of freedom is going about for seeking pleasures of entertainment, and not to have been bound to their hearth like slaves.[108] There were also certain religious rites prescribed for young girls such as "Pāvai-Nōṉbu" (பாவை நோன்பு) which entailed arising before dawn and going to a river or a pond to bathe and perform the rites, at the same time, praying to their Gods for the gift of a good husband.[109]

There is an interesting account in Maduraikkāñchi of women resorting to Tirupparañkuṉṟam, and worshipping at the temple of God Murugaṉ with their hands locked with those of their husbands and children. This shows that they had been moving about freely and could visit any place of their choice.[110] Paripāḍal also gives us a graphic account of families and relations gathering at Tirumāl-Iruñchōlai (திருமாலிருஞ்சோலை) for worshipping Thirumāl (திருமால்).[111]

A lord of the Kuriñchi tract is reported to have performed severe penance and had a daughter born to him.[112] The great poet Pisirāndaiyār (பிசிராந்தையார்), when questioned how he could have continued to sport his dark hair, even in his advanced years, replied that it was possible for him, because, he had the fortune of possessing a wife was very good to him possessing exemplary character.[113]

We have already seen that more than fifty women poets have contributed to the enrichment of the Sangam literature. Women appear to have been aware of the cultural and other

possibilities afforded by education and many of them have excelled in enlargement of their knowledge. Poet Avvaiyār was a scholar respected and revered by chieftains and monarchs. King Adhigamāṉ held her in such honour and reverence that he presented her a rare Nelli fruit (நெல்லிக் கனி) which had the divine attribute of prolonging life even though he might have tasted the Kaṟpa drug (கற்பம்).[114] The poetess, In her turn, exercised her good offices to see that the proposed war between Adhigamāṉ and Thoṇḍaimāṉ did not happen at all.[115]

STOOPING TO WIFE (பெண்வழிச் சேறல்)

This term has been explained by Parimēlaḻakar, a renowned commentator of Tirukkuṟaḷ, as connoting a person following a wife who had her own predilections and ways of life.[116] Dr. M. Varadarajanar has the following remarks to offer in the matter in one of his expositions of Tirukkuṟaḷ. "A man has certain family duties to attend, and also certain public duties. A woman who has been depicted by Tiruvaḷḷuvar in his Aṟaththuppāl as a life's companion, and in Poruṭpāl as a colleague facilitating the performance of his public functions. Tiruvaḷḷuvar has a word of disapprobation only when the woman stands as an obstruction to the efficient discharge of the duties of her husband. Even then it is interesting to note, he does not rebuke the wayward woman herself, but proceeds to rectify her husband only. He expresses emphatically against a woman crossing the path of her husband's duties to the public. Tiruvaḷḷuvar has always offered to women an equal status with men. The frailty of a woman bending to all the whims of her husbands will disrupt a family. Similarly a man becoming a slave to the caprices of his wife will hurt his public life."[117]

THE ULTIMATE LOWERING OF WOMEN'S STATUS

Subsequently at the end of the Sangam epoch the status of women in Tamil society appears to have suffered a fall.

The domestic virtue of the husband valuing his duties as his life, and the wife considering her husband as her life, began to lose its meaning and importance. Because in some of the Pathinen-kīlkkaṇakku (பதினெண் கீழ்க்கணக்கு) compositions we are distressed to find the following remarks:

"Innā Nārpathu" says that a man should shun as poison a woman with soft, rounded, bamboo like a shcot.[118]

Blemished and implaceable women have been beaten with sticks.[119]

A termagent wife,[120] a woman involving herself in legal fights,[121] and a man always living in fear of his wife have all come under the condemnation of the later day moralists.[122]

Various reasons have been adduced for the fall of women from their high pedestal in society. One of them is that the Jain and Buddhistic Doctrines spread widely in Tamilaham during the 5th, 6th and 7th centuries A.D. and that these faiths carried a propaganda that women stood on the path of the spiritual progress of man.

THE GREATNESS ACHIEVED BY MEN THROUGH WOMEN

Whenever a man, whether a king or a chieftain has been spoken of the Sangam literature by the poets they are mostly referred to as the husband of such and such a lady. This fact is an important one and has to be assessed adequately.

The poets of Pathirruppaththu have hailed the heroes of the compositions with the following attributes:

"Nallōḷ Kaṇavaṉ" (நல்லோள் கணவன்)[124]
"Puraiyōḷ Kaṇavaṉ" (புரையோள் கணவன்)[125]
"Sēyiḷai Kaṇavaṉ" (சேயிழை கணவன்)[126]
and "Oṇḍoṭi-k-Kaṇavaṉ" (ஒண்டொடிக் கணவன்)[127]

In one of the love episodes of "Aham" life, we are informed that a maid-companion to the lady-in-love refuses to bring the Thalaivi (தலைவி) to her lover. The lover then

threatens that he would ride the palmyra horse (மடலேறுதல்) and proclaim to the wide world that his love had brought him to this plight with her unrequired love; If people saw in the painted picture, he was carrying, the images of both himself and his loved-one together, they will find out which good girls lord he was. He is proud to refer himself as the lord of a "good girl" (நல்லோள்)[148]

Nakkīrar calls God Murugaṉ as the husband of Deiva Yāṉai, of unblemished chastity, perhaps because of the traditional attributes of virtues and goodness given to women.[149]

Thiruñāṉna Sambandar, refers to Lord Siva as the father of Murugaṉ, the husband of Vaḷḷi in his Thirumaṟaikkāḍu hymn (திருமறைக்காட்டுத் திருப்பதிகம்).[150]

CONCLUSION

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I believe it is time for me to conclude. I have placed before you enough material these two days to enable a study of the high status and position women had attained during the Sangam period. We have seen how they had the extraordinary privilege and freedom of choice in selecting their life's partners, how they had been offering their husbands conjugal pleasures and the counsels of a minister, and above all how they had been treated as the queens of the home.

Even a person, given to occasional moral lapses like friendship with Paraththais, returns like a black sheep to his wife ultimately. Though she is angry with him she employs words of moral authority and rebuke. The husband admits that she has a right to reprimand him for his act of infidelity.

While in the later literary compositions like Puranas, Kōvais etc., it had become the custom of the poets to sing on the rapturous beauty of a feminine form, the Sangam poets mostly confined their attention to the mental equipment and

cultural attainments of women. The Sangam poets had always been harping on the virtues of chastity, and culture.

The late lamented Rājāji has pronounced that to become a gentleman, one requires a man's brain, a woman's heart and the feeling of a child.

The Bible contains a sage advice that a cultured wife is the crown of her husband. In concluding I wish to emphasise on the fact that the women of ancient Tamiḻagam were in enjoyment of higher privileges, freedom, scope and opportunities than at any time later.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it had been my privilege to deliver these endowment lectures and I know the audience is a discriminating, critical and at the same time an appreciative one.

I hope Ladies and Gentlemen that I have not trespassed on your patience and forbearance.

Mr. President, you had been very kind and considerate to me these two days, and it was my rare and good fortune to deliver my first endowment lectures under your auspices.

I am very happy that my chief Dr. Sanjeevi, has always been insisting on me, as on all research scholars that a research worker should go deep into a matter and then make a comparative study of it. "The two mottos he has coined are" (ஒப்பு நோக்குவோம்) and "உற்று நோக்குவோம்." These mottos have been stimulating and inspiring students of Tamil like me and have served to descipline and regulate research work.

I am grateful very much to the Ladies especially who have graced this occasion in large numbers and bent their patient ears to my talk.

At the risk of repetition, I should like to thank again Dr. M. Varadarajanar but for whose insistent efforts to mould me in my formative years and instil into me a sense of duty, love of Tamil and power of expression; I should not have been what I am now.

The Status of Women in Tamil Nadu During the Sangam Age

Notes

1. Kavimaṇi Dēsika Vināyakam Piḷḷai:
'Malarum Mālaiyum.'
—Peṇṇi ṉUrimaikal, p. 148

2. Bhāratidāsaṉ:
'Bhāratidāsaṉ Kavitaikaḷ.'
—Volume I. "Peṇkaḷaippaṟṟi Bernard Sha"

3. Bhāratidāsaṉ:
'Bhāratidāsen Kavitaikaḷ'—Volume-I.
—Peṉkuḷantal Tālāṭṭu

4. Bhāratidāsaṉ:
'Kuḍumba Viḷakku'
—Part. I, p. 16

5. "நாடா கொன்றோ காடா கொன்றோ
அவலா கொன்றோ மிசையா கொன்றோ
எவ்வழி நல்லவ ராடவர்
அவ்வழி நல்லை வாழிய நிலனே."
—Avvaiyār, Puṟanāṉūṟu, 187

6. "அச்சமும் நாணும் மடனுமுந் துறுத்த
நிச்சமும் பெண்பாற் குரிய என்ப."
—Tolkāppiyam, Kaḷaviyal, 8

7. "செறிவும் நிறையுஞ் செம்மையுஞ் செப்பும்
அறிவும் அருமையும் பெண்பா லான."
—Tolkāppiyam, Poruḷiyal, 15

8. "மாதர் காதல்"
—Tolkāppiyam, Uriyiyal, 32

9. "உயிரினுஞ் சிறந்தன்று நாணே நாணினுஞ்
செயிர்தீர் காட்சிக் கற்புச்சிறந் தன்றெனத்
தொல்லோர் கிளவி புல்லிய நெஞ்சமொடு
காமக் கிழவ னுள்வழிப் படினுந்
தாவில் நன்மொழி கிழவி கிளப்பினும்
ஆவகை பிறவுந் தோன்றுமன் பொருளே.
—Tolkāppiyam, Kaḷaviyal, 23

10. "பெருமையும் உரனும் ஆடூஉ மேன."
—Tolkāppiyam, Kaḷaviyal, 7

11. "நீரோ ரன்ன சாயல்
தீயோ ரன்னவென் னுரனவித் தன்றே"
—Kuṟuntokai, 95:4-5

12. "நீரோ ரன்ன சாயல்"
—Kuṟuntokai, 95:4

13. "பயிலியது கெழீஇய நட்பின் மயிலியற்"
—Kuṟuntokai, 2:3

14. "நறுந்தண் ணியளே நன்மா மேனி"
—Kuṟuntokai, 168:4

15. "செறியெயிற் றரிவை கூந்தலின்
நறியவு முளவோநீ யறியும் பூவே"
—Kuṟuntokai, 2:4-5

16. "யாயா கியளே மாஅ யோளே"
—Kuṟuntokai, 9

"மையீ ரோதி மாஅ யோள்வயின்."
—Kuṟuntokai, 199

17. "பூவொடு புரையுங் கண்ணும் வேயென
விறல்வனப் பெய்திய தோளும் பிறையென
மதிமயக் குறூஉ நுதலும்."
—Kuṟuntokai, 226:1-3

18. "வேயெனத் திரண்டதோள் வெறிகமழ் வணரைம்பால்
மாவென்ற மடநோக்கின் மயிலியல் தளர்பொல்கி
ஆய்சிலம் பரியார்ப்ப அவிரொளி யிழையிமைப்பக்
கொடியென மின்னென அணங்கென யாதொன்றுந்
தெரிகல்லா இடையின்கட் கண்கவர் பொருங்கோட
வளமைசா லுயர்சிறப்பின் நுந்தைதொல் வியனகர்
இளமையான் எறிபந்தோ டிகத்தந்தாய் கேளினி."
—Kuṟiñcikkali, 21:1-7

19. "பிறப்பே குடிமை ஆண்மை யாண்டோ
டுருவு நிறுத்த காம வாயில்
நிறையே யருளே உணர்வொடு திருவென
முறையுறக் கிளந்த ஒப்பினது வகையே."
—Tolkāppiyam-Meippāṭṭiyal, 25

20. "ஒன்றே வேறே என்றிரு பால்வயின்
ஒன்றி உயர்ந்த பால தாணையின்
ஒத்த கிழவனுங் கிழத்தியும் காண்ப
மிக்கோ னாயினுங் கடிவரை யின்றே."

—Tolkāppiyam, Kaḷaviyal, 2

21. "ஒளிறுவா ளருஞ்சம முருக்கிக்
களிறெறிந்து பெயர்தல் காளைக்குக் கடனே."

—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 312:5-6

22. "முனைக்குவரம் பாகிய வென்வே னெடுந்தகை."

—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 314-2

23. "ஈன்ற வயிறோ விதுவே
தோன்றுவன் மாதோ போர்க்களத் தானே."

—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 86:5-6

24. "பொய்யா நாவிற் கபிலன் பாடிய."

—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 174:10

25. "குறியிறைக் குரம்பைக் குறவர் மாக்கள்
வாங்கமைப் பழுனிய தேறன் மகிழ்ந்து
வேங்கை முன்றிற் குரவை யயரும்
தீஞ்சுளைப் பலவின் மாமலைக் கிழவன்
ஆஅ யண்டிர னடுபோ ரண்ணல்
இரவலர்க் கீத்த யானையிற் கரவின்று
வான மீன்பல பூப்பி னானா
தொருவழிக் கருவழி யின்றிப்
பெருவெள் ளென்னிற் பிழையாது மன்னே."

—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 129

26. "குன்றக் குறவன் கடவுட் பேணி
இரந்தனன் பெற்ற எல்வளைக் குறுமகள்
ஆயரி நெடுங்கண் கலுழச்
சேயதாற் றெய்யநீ பிரியு நாடே." —Aiṅkuṟunūṟu, 257

27. "சுனைப்பூக் குற்றுத் தொடலை தைஇப்
புனக்கிளி கடியும் பூங்கட் பேதை."

—Kuṟuntokai, 142:2-1

28. "விளையா டாயமொடு ஓரை யாடாது
இளையோர் இல்லிடத் திற்செறிந் திருத்தல்
அறனும் அன்றே ஆக்கமுந் தேய்ம்மெனக்
குறுநுரை சுமந்து நறுமலர் உந்திப்
பொங்கிவரு புதுநீர் நெஞ்சுண ஆடுகம்."

—Naṟṟiṇai, 68:1-5

29. "பணைத்தோட் குறுமகள் பாவை தைஇயும்
பஞ்சாய்ப் பள்ளஞ் சூழ்ந்து மற்றிவள்."
—Kuṟuntokai, 276:1-2

30. "தாதிற் செய்த தண்பனிப் பாவை
காலை வருந்துங் கையா றோம்பென
ஓரை யாயங் கூறக்கேட்டும்."
—Kuṟuntokai, 48:1-3

31. "உறாஅ வறுமுலை மடாஅ
உண்ணாப் பாவையை யூட்டு வோளே."
—Aiṅkuṟunūṟu, 128:2-3

32. "சுடர்விரி வினைபாய்ந்த தூதையும் பாவையும்
விளையாட அரிப்பெய்த அழகமை புனைவினை."
—Kuṟiñcikkali, 23:5-6

33. "வையெயிற் றவர்நாப்பண் வகையணிப் பொலிந்துநீ
தையில்நீ ராடிய தவந்தலைப் படுவாயோ."
—Kuṟiñcikkali, 23:12-13

34. "பொய்தல மகளையாய்ப் பிறர்மனைப் பாடிநீ
யெய்திய பலர்க்கீத்த பயம்பயக் கிற்பதோ
ஆய்தொடி யைதுயிர்த் திவனுண்ணோய் யாதென்னும்
நோயிலை யிவட்கென நொதுமலர் பழிக்குங்கால்."
—Kuṟiñcikkali, 23.16-19

35. "பாசவ லிடித்த கருங்கா ழுலக்கை
ஆய்கதிர் நெல்லின் வரம்பணைத் துயிற்றி
ஒண்டொடி மகளிர் வண்ட லயரும்."
—Kuṟuntokai, 238:1.3

36. "அவலெறிந்த வுலக்கை வாழைச் சேர்த்தி
வளைக்கை மகளிர் வள்ளி கொய்யும்."
—Patiṟṟuppattu, 29:1-2

37. "செறியரிச் சிலம்பிற் குறுந்தொடி மகளிர்
பொலஞ்செய் கழங்கிற் றெற்றி யாடும்."
—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 36:3-4

38. Naṟṟiṇai; 79:2-3.

39. "காமர் கடும்புனல் கலந்தெம்மோ டாடுவாள்
தாமரைக் கண் புதைத்தஞ்சித் தளர்ந்ததனோ
டொழுகலான்,"
—Kuṟiñcikkali, 3:1-2

40. "அறிவுடை யோனா றரசுஞ் செல்லும்."
—Puranāṉūṟu, 183:7

41. "தோழி தானே செவிலி மகளே."
—Tolkāppiyam, Kaḷaviyal, 35

42. Kuruntogai; 42:1-4.

43. "யாயா கியளே விழவுமுத லாட்டி."
—Kuruntogai, 10:1

44. "சிறுமுது குறைவிக்குச் சிறுமையும் செய்தேன்."
—Silampu-Kolaikkaḷakkatai, 68

45. "ஒலியல் வார்மயிர் உளரினள் கொடிச்சி
பெருவரை மருங்கிற் குறிஞ்சி பாடக்
குரலுங் கொள்ளாது நிலையினும் பெயராது
படாஅப் பைங்கண் பாடுபெற் றொய்யென
மதம்புகல் மழகளிறு உறங்கும் நாடன்."
—Akanāṉūṟu, 102:5-9

46. "ஆறலை கள்வர் படைவிட வருளின்
மாறுதலை பெயர்க்கு மருவின் பாலை."
—Porunarāṟṟuppaṭai, 21-22

47. "வேந்துறு விழுமந் தாங்கிய
பூம்பொறிக் கழற்கா னெடுந்தகை புண்ணே."
—Puranāṉūṟu, 281:8-9

48. "கொடுவரி பாய்ந்தெனக் கொழுநர் மார்பின்
நெடுவசி விழுப்புண் தணிமார் காப்பென
அறல்வாழ் கூந்தற் கொடிச்சியர் பாடல்."
—Malaipaṭukaṭām, 302-304

49. "இவனிவ ளைம்பால் பற்றவு மிவளிவன்
புன்றலை யோரி வாங்குநள் பரியவும்
காதற் செவிலியர் தவிர்ப்பவுந் தவிராது
ஏதில் சிறுசெரு வுறுப மன்னோ
நல்லைமன் றம்ம பாலே மெல்லியற்
துணைமலர்ப் பிணைய லன்னவிவர்
மணமகி ழியற்கை காட்டி யோயே."
—Kuruntokai, 229

50. "யாயு ஞாயும் யாரா கியரோ
எந்தையு நுந்தையு மெம்முறைக் கேளிர்
யானு நீயு மெவ்வழி யறிதும்

செம்புலப் பெயனீர் போல
அன்புடை நெஞ்சந் தாங்கலந் தனவே.''
—Kuruntokai, 40

51. ''குன்றக் குறவன் காதன் மடமகள்
வண்டுபடு கூந்தற் றண்டழைக் கொடிச்சி
வளையள் முளைவா ளெயிற்றள்
இளைய ளாயினும் ஆரணங் கினளே.''
—Aiṅkuṟunūṟu, 259

52. ''கொல்லேற்றுக் கோடஞ்சு வானை மறுமையும்
புல்லாளே ஆய மகள்.''
—Kalittokai, 103:63-64

53. ''கொல்லேறு சாட இருந்தார்க்கெம் பல்லிருங்
கூந்த லணைகொடுப்பேம் யாம்.''
—Mullaikkali, 1:41-42

54. ''முழங்குகடன் முழவின் முசிறி யன்ன
நலஞ்சால் விழுப்பொருள் பணிந்துவந்து கொடுப்பினும்
புரைய ரல்லோர் வரையல ளிவளெனத்
தந்தையுங் கொடான்.''
—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 383:10-13

55. ''அருமழை தரல் வேண்டில் தருகிற்கும் பெருமையளே.''
—Kuriñcikkali, 3, 6

56. ''தெய்வம் தொழாஅள் கொழுநன் தொழுதெழுவாள்
பெய்யெனப் பெய்யும் மழை.''
—Tirukkuṟaḷ, 55

57. ''காந்தள் கடிகமழுங் கண்வாங் கிருஞ்சிலம்பின்
வாங்கமை மென்றோட் குறவர் மடமகளிர்
தாம்பிழையார் கேள்வர்த் தொழுதெழலாற் றம்மையருந்
தாம்பிழையார் தாந்தொடுத்த கோல்.''
—Kuriñcikkali, 3:15-18

58. ''வரிமணன் முன்னுறைச் சிற்றில் புனைந்த
திருநுதல் ஆயத்தார் தம்முட் புணர்ந்த
ஒருமணந் தானறியு மாயின் எனைத்துந்
தெருமரல் கைவிட் டிருக்கே அலர்ந்த
விரிநீர் உடுக்கை யுலகம் பெறினும்
அருநெறி ஆயர் மகளிர்க்கு
இருமணங் கூடுதல் இல்லியல் பன்றே.
—Mullaikkali, 14:15-21

59. "ஆயர் மகனாயின் ஆயமகள் நீயாயின்
நின் வெய்ய னாயின் அவன்வெய்யை நீயாயின்
நின்னைநோ தக்கதோ இல்லைமன் நின்நெஞ்சம்
அன்னைநெஞ் சாகப் பெறின்."
—Mullaikkali, 7:20-23

60. "அகலிரு விசும்பின் மீனினும்
பலரே மறைவிவ் வுலகத்துப் பிறரே."
—Kuruntokai, 44:3-4

61. "கற்புங் காமமும் நற்பால் ஒழுக்கமும்
மெல்லியற் பொறையும் நிறையும் வல்லிதின்
விருந்துபுறந் தருதலுஞ் சுற்றம் ஓம்பலும்
பிறவும் அன்ன கிழவோள் மாண்புகள்."
—Tolkāppiyam, Karpiyal, 11

62. "காதலொருவனைக் கைப்பிடித்தே யவன்
காரியங்கள் யாவினுங் கைகொடுத்து
மாதரறங்கள் பழமையைக் காட்டிலும்
மாட்சிபெறச் செய்து வாழ்வமடி."
—Bāratiyār Kavithaigal, Vidutalaikkummi, 8

63. "ஒருமை மகளிரே போலப் பெருமையும்
தன்னைத்தான் கொண்டொழுகின் உண்டு."
—Tirukkural, 974

64. "மனைத்தக்க மாண்புடையள் ஆகித்தற் கொண்டான்
வளத்தக்காள் வாழ்க்கைத் துணை."
—Tirukkural, 51

65. "வாழி யாதன் வாழி யவினி
வேந்துபகை தணிக யாண்டுபல நந்துக
எனவேட் டோளே யாயே யாமே
மலர்ந்த பொய்கை முகைந்த தாமரைத்

தண்டுறை யூரன் வரைக
எந்தையும் கொடுக்க வெனவேட் டேமே."
—Aiṅkurunūru-Vēṭkaippattu, 6

66. "ஈண்டுந் தலைவியை 'யாயென்றது' எதிர்ப்பட்ட
ஞான்றே கற்புப் பூண்டொழுகின்ற சிறப்பை நோக்கி!"
—Aiṅkurunūru-Old Commentary

67. Dr. V.SP. Manickam: Tamil-k-Kāthal:
—Page: 154

68. ''கற்பெனப் படுவது கரணமொடு புணரக்
கொளற்குரி மரபிற் கிழவன் கிழத்தியைக்
கொடைக்குரி மரபினோர் கொடுப்பக்கொள் வதுவே.
—Tolkāppiyam, Kaṟppiyal, 1

69. ''கொடுப்போர்'' இன்றியுங் கரணம் உண்டே
புணர்ந்துடன் போகிய காலை யான.''
—Tolkāppiyam, Kaṟpiyal, 2

70. ''பொய்யும் வழுவும் தோன்றிய பின்னர்
ஐயர் யாத்தனர் கரணம் என்ப.''
—Tolkāppiyam, Kaṟpiyal, 4

71. Tolkāppiyam: Kaṟpiyal Iḷampūraṇar Commentary.

72. ''உயிரினுஞ் சிறந்தன்று நாணே நாணினுஞ்
செயிர்தீர் காட்சிக் கற்புச்சிறந் தன்றெனத்
தொல்லோர் கிளவி புல்லிய நெஞ்சமொடு
காமக் கிழவ னுள்வழுப் படினுந்
தாவில் நன்மொழி கிழவி கிளப்பினும்
ஆவகை பிறவுந் தோன்றுமன் பொருளே.''
—Tolkāppiyam, Kaḷaviyal, 22

73. ''பெண்ணின் பெருந்தக்க யாவுள கற்பென்னும்
திண்மைஉண் டாகப் பெறின்.''
—Tirukkuṟaḷ, 54

74. ''இன்துணை மகளிக் கின்றி யமையாக்
கற்புக்கடம் பூண்ட இத்தெய்வ மல்லது
பொற்புடைத் தெய்வம் யாங்கண் டிலமால்.''
—Silappatikāram: Aḍaikkalakkātai, 142-144

75. ''நீரின் றமையா வுலகம் போலத்
தம்மின் றமையா நந்நயந் தருளி.''
—Naṟṟiṇai, 1:6-7

76. ''உடம்பொ டுயிரிடை என்னமற் றன்ன
மடந்தையொ டெம்மிடை நட்பு.''
—Tirukkuṟaḷ, 1122

77. ''வினையே யாடவர்க் குயிரே வாணுதல்
மனையுறை மகளிர்க் காடவ ருயிரென''
—Kuṟuntokai, 135:1-2

78. Kuṟuntokai-79.

79. "அன்னையு மத்தனு மல்லரோ தோழி
புலவியஃ தெவனோ அன்பிலங் கடையே."
—Kuruntokai, 93:3-4

80. "காலை யெழுந்து கடுந்தேர் பண்ணி
வாலிழை மகளிர்த் தழீஇய சென்ற
மல்ல லூர னெல்லினன் பெரிதென
மறுவருஞ் சிறுவன் றாயே
தெறுவ தம்மவித் திணைப்பிறத் தல்லே."
—Kuruntokai, 45

81. "சாதல் அஞ்சேன் அஞ்சுவல் சாவிற்
பிறப்புப் பிறிதா குவது ஆயின்
மறக்குவேன் கொல்லென் காதலன் எனவே."
—Narrinai, 397

82. "இம்மை மாறி மறுமை யாயினும்
நீரா கியரென் கணவனை
யானா கியர்நின் னெஞ்சுநேர் பவளே."
—Kuruntokai, 49:3-5

83. "போற்றா வொழுக்கம் புரிந்தீர் யாவதும்
மாற்றா உள்ள வாழ்க்கையே னாதலின்
ஏற்றெழுந் தனன்யான்........."
—Silappatikāram, Kolaikkaḷakkātai, 81-83

84. "சேக்கை இனியார்பாற் செல்வான் மனையாளாற்
காக்கை கடிந்தொழுகல் கூடுமோ கூடா
தகவுடை மங்கையர் சான்றாண்மை சான்றார்
இகழினுங் கேள்வரை யேத்தி இறைஞ்சுவார்."
—Paripāḍal, 20;86-89

85. "பிரசங் கலந்த வெண்சுவைத் தீம்பால்
விரிகதிர்ப் பொற்கலத்து ஒருகை ஏந்திப்
புடைப்பின் சுற்றும் பூந்தலைச் சிறுகோல்
உண்ணென் றோக்குபு புடைப்பத் தெண்ணீர்
முத்தரிப் பொன்சிலம்பு ஒலிப்பத் தத்துற்று
அரிநரைக் கூந்தல் செம்முது செவிலியர்
பரிமெலிந் தொழியப் பந்தர் ஓடி
ஏவல் மறுக்குஞ் சிறுவிளை யாட்டி
அறிவும் ஒழுக்கமும் யாண்டுணர்ந் தனள்கொல்
கொண்ட கொழுநன் குடிவறன் உற்றெனக்
கொடுத்த தந்தை கொழுஞ்சோறு உள்ளாள்

ஒழுகுநீர் நுணங்கறல் போலப்
பொழுதுமறுத்து உண்ணுஞ் சிறுமது கையளே."
—Naṟṟiṇai, 110

86. "அன்னாய் வாழிவேண் டன்னைநம் படப்பை
தேன்மயங்கு பாலினு மினிய வவர்நாட்
டுவலைக் கூவற் கீழ
மானுண் டெஞ்சிய கலிழி நீரே."
—Aiṅkuṟunūṟu, 203

87. "அகழ்வாரைத் தாங்கும் நிலம்போலத் தம்மை
இகழ்வார்ப் பொறுத்தல் தலை."
—Tirukkuṟaḷ, 151

88. "தாயுடன் றலைக்குங் காலையும் வாய்விட்
டன்னா யென்னும் குழவி போல
இன்னா செயினு மினிதுதலை யளிப்பினும்
நின்வரைப் பினளென் றோழி
தன்னுறு விழுமங் களைஞரோ விலளே."
—Kuṟuntokai, 397:4.8

89. "அன்புடைக் கணவ ரழிதகச் செயினும்
பெண்பிறந் தோர்க்குப் பொறையே பெருமை."
—Peruṅkatai, 4:14 (98-99)

90. "விற்பெருந் தடக்கை வீர வீங்குநீ ரிலங்கை வெற்பின்
நற்பெருந் தவத்த ளாய நங்கையைக் கண்டே னல்லேன்
இற்பிறப் பென்ப தொன்று மிரும்பொறை யென்பதொன்றும்
கற்பெனும் பெயர தொன்றுங் களிநடம் புரியக் கண்டேன்."
—Kambarāmāyaṇam-Sundarakāṇḍam,
Toluda Paḍalam

91. "அன்னை தயையும் அடியாள் பணியும்
மலர்ப் பொன்னின் எழிலும் புவிப்பொறையும்
வன்னவுடல் வேசித்துயிலும், விறல் மந்திரி அறிவும்
பேசில் இவையுடையாள் பெண்."

92. "கட்கினியாள், காதலன் காதல் வகைபுனைவாள்
உட்குடையாள், ஊர்நாண் இயல்பினாள்—உட்கி
இடனறிந் தூடி இனிதின் உணரும்
மடமொழி மாதராள் பெண்."
—Nāladiyār, 384

93. "நிறையும் மறைபுலப் படாமை நிறுக்கும்
நெஞ்சுடைமையும்."
—Tolkāppiyam. Kaṟppiyal Commentary Naccinārkkiniar

94. "யாயா கியளே மாஅ யோளே
மடைமாண் செப்பிற் றமிய வைகிய
பெய்யாப் பூவின் மெய்சா யினளே
பாசடை நிவந்த கணைக்கா னெய்தல்
இனமீ னிருங்கழி யோத மல்குதொறும்
கயமூழ்கு மகளிர் கண்ணின் மானும்
தண்ணந் துறைவன் கொடுமை
நம்மு னாணிக் கரப்பா டும்மே."

—Kuṟuntokai, 9

95. "யாயா கியளே விழவுமுத லாட்டி
பயறுபோ லிணரப் பைந்தாது படீஇயர்
உழவர் வாங்கிய கமழ்பூ மென்சினைக்
காஞ்சி யூரன் கொடுமை
கரந்தன ளாகலி னாணிய வருமே.'

—Kuṟuntokai, 10

96. "விருந்தே தானும்
புதுவது புனைந்த யாப்பின் மேற்றே."

—Tolkāppiyam, Ceyyuḷiyal; 231

97. "மறப்பரும் கேண்மையோ டறப்பரி சாரமும்
விருந்துபுறந் தருஉம் பெருந்தண் வாழ்க்கையும்."

—Cilappatikāram, Maṉaiyaṟampaṭutha Kātai, 85-86

98. "அறவோர்க் களித்தலும் அந்தண ரோம்பலும்
துறவோர்க் கெதிர்தலும் தொல்லோர் சிறப்பின்
விருந்தெதிர் கோடலும் இழந்த என்னை."

—Cilappatikāram-Kolaikkaḷakkātai, 71-73

99. "விருந்து கண்டபோ தென்னுறுமோ வென்று விம்மும்."

—Kambarāmāyaṇam, Sundara Kāṇḍam, Kāṭcippaḍalam, 15

100. "அல்லில் ஆயினும் விருந்துவரின் உவக்கும்
முல்லை சான்ற கற்பின்
மெல்லியல் குறுமகள் உறைவின் ஊரே."

—Naṟṟiṇai, 142, 9-11

101. "பலர்புகு வாயி லடைப்பக் கடவுதர்
வருவீ ருளீரோ வெனவும்
வாரார் தோழிநங் காத லோரே."

—Kuṟuntokai, 118:2-5

102. "வருநர்க்கு வரையா வளநகர் பொற்ப
மலரத் திறந்த வாயில் பலருண."
—Kuriñcippāṭṭu, 202-3

103. "உலகுபுகத் திறந்த வாயிற்
பலரோ டுண்டல் மரீஇ யோனே."
Puranānūru, 234:5-9

104. Nambiyakaporuḷ: Akatiṇaiyiyal.

105. Tolkāppiyam: Karpiyal-11, Commentary-
Naccinārkkiniyar.

106. "முளிதயிர் பிசைந்த காந்தண் மெல்விரல்
கழுவுறு கலிங்கங் கழாஅ துடீஇக்
குவளை யுண்கண் குய்ப்புகை கமழத்
தான்றுழந் தட்ட தீம்புளிப் பாகர்
இனிதெனக் கணவ னுண்டலின்
நுண்ணிதின் மகிழ்ந்தன் றொண்ணுதன் முகனே."
—Kuruntokai, 167

107. "உண்டனன் உண்ணக் கண்ட
நகைமுத்தோ உவப்பை உண்டாள்."
—Kuḍumba viḷakku: Part. III

108. "அருந்து மெல்லடகு ஆரிட வருந்துமென் றழுங்கும்."
—Kambarāmāyaṇam-Sundarakāṇḍam,
Kāṭcippaḍalam-15:1

109. "ஏனது சுவைப்பினு நீகை தொட்டது
வானோ ரமுதம் புரையுமா லெமக்கென
அடிசிலும் பூவுந் தொடுதற் கண்ணும்."
—Tolkāppiyam, Karpiyal, 5

110. "வேம்பின் பைங்காயென் றோழி தரினே
தேம்பூங் கட்டி யென்றனி ரினியே."
—Kuruntokai, 196:1-2

111. Tiruveṅgaikkōvai: 403.

112. Tolkāppiyam, Purattiṇaiyiyal 4.
Iḷampūraṇar's commentary.

113. "கெடுக சிந்தை கடிதிவள் துணிவே
மூதின் மகளி ராதல் தகுமே
மேனா ளுற்ற செருவிற் கிவள்தன்னை
யானை யெறிந்து களத்தொழிந் தனனே

நெடுந லுற்ற செருவிற் கிவள்கொழுநன்
பெருநிரை விலங்கி யாண்டுப்பட் டனனே
இன்றும், செருப்பறை கேட்டு விருப்புற்று மயங்கி
வேல்கைக் கொடுத்து வெளிதுவிரித் துடீஇப்
பாறுமயிர்க் குடுமி யெண்ணெய் நீவி
ஒருமக னல்ல தில்லோள்
செருமுக நோக்கிச் செல்கென விடுமே.''

—Puranāṉūṟu, 279

114. ''மனைக்குவிளக் காகிய வாணுதல்.''

—Puranāṉūṟu, 314:1

115. ''மனைக்கு விளக்கம் மடவாள்.''

—Nāṉmaṇikkaḍigai, 105:1

116. ''மனைக்குப்பாழ் வாள்நுத லின்மைதான்.''

—Nāṉmaṇikkaḍigai, 22:1

117. ''புகழ்புரிந் தில்லிலோர்க் கில்லை இகழ்வார்முன்
ஏறுபோல் பீடு நடை.''

—Tirukkuṟaḷ, 656

118. ''இல்லதென் இல்லவள் மாண்பானால்.''

—Tirukkuṟaḷ, 52

119. 'மங்கலம் என்ப மனைமாட்சி'

—Tirukkuṟaḷ, 60

120. ''ஒன்றன்கூ றாடை யுடுப்பவரே யாயினும்
ஒன்றினார் வாழ்க்கையே வாழ்க்கை.''

—Pālaikkali, 18:9-11

121. 'இருதலைப் புள்ளின் ஒருயி ரம்மே.'

—Akanāṉūṟu; 12:5

122. ''அருவரைச் சேராத் தொழுநர்
கனவிற் றொட்டது கைபிழை யாகாது
நனவிற் சேஎப்பநின் னளிபுனல் வையை
வருபுனல் அணிகென வரங்கொள் வோரும்
கருவயி றுறுகெனக் கடம்படு வோரும்
செய்பொருள் வாய்க்கெனச் செவிசார்த்து வோரும்
ஐயம ரடுகென வருச்சிப் போரும்.''

—Paripāḍal, 8:102

123. ''திண்கதிர் மதாணி யொண்குறு மாக்களை
ஓம்பினர்த் தழீஇத் தாம்புணர்ந்து முயங்கித்

தாதணி தாமரைப் போதுபிடித் தாங்குத்
தாமு மவரும் ஓராங்கு விளங்கக்
காமர் கவினிய பேரிளம் பெண்டிர்
பூவினர் புகையினர் தொழுவினர் பழிச்சிச்
சிறந்துபுறங் காக்குங் கடவுட் பள்ளி.''
—Maduraikkāñci, 461-467

124. ''நிலத்தினும் பெரிதே வானினு முயர்ந்தன்று
நீரினு மாரள வின்றே சாரற்
கருங்கோற் குறிஞ்சிப் பூக்கொண்டு
பெருந்தே னிழைக்கு நாடனொடு நட்பே.''
—Kuṟuntokai, 3

125. ''ஓரான் வல்சிச் சீரில் வாழ்க்கை
பெருநலக் குறுமகள் வந்தென
இனிவிழ வாயிற் றென்னு மிவ்வூரே.''
—Kuṟuntokai, 265:4-6

126. ''யாண்டுபல வாக நரையில வாகுதல்
யாங்கா கியரென வினவுதி ராயின்
மாண்டவென் மனைவியொடு மக்களு நிரம்பினர்.''
—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 191:1-3

127. ''இம்மைப் பிறப்பில் பிரியலம் என்றேனாக்
கண்நிறை நீர்கொண் டனள்.''
—Tirukkuṟaḷ, 1315

128. ''பெருந்தோட் கணவன் மாய்ந்தென வரும்பற
வள்ளித ழவிழ்ந்த தாமரை
நள்ளிரும் பொய்கையுந் தீயுமோ ரற்றே.''
—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 246:13-15

129. ''காதல ரிறப்பிற் கனையெரி பொத்தி
ஊதுலைக் குருகின் உயிர்த்தகத் தடங்காது
இன்னுயி ரீவர் ஈயா ராயின்
நன்னீர்ப் பொய்கையின் நளியெரி புகுவர்
நளியெரி புகாஅ ராயின் அன்பரோடு
உடனுறை வாழ்க்கைக்கு நோற்றுடம் படுவர்.''
—Maṇimēkalai, 2:42-47

130. ''கணவனை யிழந்தோர்க்குக் காட்டுவதில்.''
—Cilappatikāram, Vaḻakkuraikātai, 80

131. "ஒருங்குடன் மாய்ந்த பெண்டிர்க் காயினும்
....
சுடுமண் ஓங்கிய நெடுநிலைக் கோட்டம்."
—Manimekalai, 6:55-59

132. "உடன்வீழ்ந் தன்றா லமரே பெண்டிரும்
பாசடகு மிசையார் பனிநீர் மூழ்கார்
மார்பகம் பொருந்தி யாங்கமைந் தனரே,"
—Puranāṉūṟu, 62:13-15

133. Puranāṉūṟu : 240

134. Periya Purāṇam-Tirunāvukkarasu Nāyaṉār Purāṇam.

135. M. E. R.

136. M. E. R.

137. "பருத்திப் பெண்டின் பனுவ லன்ன."
—Puranāṉūṟu, 125, 1

138. "ஆளில் பெண்டிர் தாளின் செய்த
நுணங்குநுண் பனுவல் போல."
—Naṟṟiṇai, 353

139. "கழிகல மகளிர் போல
வழிநினைந் திருத்த லதனினு மரிதே."
—Puranāṉūṟu, 289:14-15

140. —Puranāṉūṟu, 25, 250, 261, 280.

141. —Folklore in the Old Testament, Part I., Ch. III., P. 377.

142. "A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband."
—Old Testament, Proverbs., XII. 4

143. "Wife's are young men's mistresses
companion for middle age and
old men's nurses".
—Francis Bacon. In Marriage and Simple Life

144. "All other good by Fortune's hands are given
A wife is the peculiar gift of heaven".
—Pope: January and May

145. "O Woman! lovely Woman! Nature made the
to temper man;
we had seen brutes without you".
—Otway, Venice Preserved. I-1

146. "Giving honour unto the wife; as unto the weaker vcssel."
—New Testament, I. Peter. II-7

147. "செல்லான் கிழவன் இருப்பின் நிலம்புலந்
தில்லாளின் ஊடி விடும்."
—Tirukkuṟaḷ, 1039

148. "இல்லதென் இல்லவள் மாண்பானால் உள்ளதென்
இல்லவள் மாணாக் கடை."
—Tirukkuṟaḷ, 53

149. "Avvaiyār, Taṉippāḍal Tiraṭṭu, Part I. P. 63.

Notes : Part II

1. "Being Dryvidian, the inhabitants of Mohanjo-Daro and Northern India, naturally spoke of a Dravidian Language."
   —Rev. Fr. Heras, Light on the Mohanjo Daro Riddle, 1

2. Puṟa-p-poruḷ Veṉbā mālai.
   —Karantaḷppaṭalam, 14

3. V. Kanagasabai Pillai.
   —"The Tamil Eighteen Hundred Years Age, p. 120

4. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri.
   —"Tamiḻar Paṇpāṭum Varalāṟum," p. 115

5. T. V. Kalyana Sundaranar.
   —"Peṇṇin Perumal, (or) Vāḻkkaittuṇai" p. 39-40

6. Dr. M. Varadarajan.
   —'Peṇmai Vāḷka,' p. 11-12

7. Dr. V. Sp. Manickam.
   —'Tamiḻkkātal,' p. 152

8. Dr. K. K. Pillai.
   —'A Social History of the Tamils,' Part I, p. 385

9. Dr. N. Subramaniyam.
   —'Sangam Polity,' p. 285

10. Dr. N. Subramaniyam
    —'Journal of Indian History'
    Vol. XXXVIII, Part I, April 1960.
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11. Jawaharlal Nehru.
    —'The Discovery of India.' p. 107

12. K. Gnanambal,
    —'Home life among the Tamils in Sangam age.' p. 107

13. "பிறப்பே குடிமை ஆண்மை யாண்டோடு
    உருவு நிறுத்த காம வாயில்
    நிறையே யருளே உணர்வொடு திருவென
    முறையுறக் கிளந்த ஒப்பினது வகையே."
    —Tolkāppiyam, Meyppāṭṭiyal. 25

14. "ஒன்றே வேறே என்றிரு பால்வயின்
ஒன்றி உயர்ந்த பால தாணையின்
ஒத்த கிழவனுங் கிழத்தியுங் காண்ப
மிக்கோ னாயினுங் கடிவரை யின்றே."
—Tolkāppiyam, Kaḷaviyal, 2

14A. Dr. V. Sp. Manickam,
'Tamil-k-kātail,' p. 152

15. Dr. M. Vara d ajan,
—'Peṇmai Vālka,' p. 26

16. Dr. M. Varadarajan,
—'Peṇmai Vālka' p. 25

17. "அண்ணாந் தேந்திய வனமுலை தளரினும்
பொன்னேர் மேனி மணியிற் றாழ்ந்த
நன்னெடுங் கூந்தல் நரையொடு முடிப்பினும்
நீத்த லோம்புமதி பூக்கே ழூர!"
—Naṟṟiṇai, 10:1-4

18. "புதுமலர் அல்ல; காய்ந்த
புற்கட்டே அவள் உடம்பு
சதிராடும் நடையாள் அல்லள்
தள்ளாடி விழும் மூதாட்டி
மதியல்ல முகம் அவட்கு
வறள்நிலம்; குழிகள் கண்கள்
எது எனக்கு இன்பம் நல்கும்
'இருக்கின்றாள்' என்பதொன்றே."
—Bhārathidāsaṉ, Kuḍumba viḷakku, Muthiyōr Kātal

19. 'பெருமையும் உரனும் ஆடூஉ மேன.'
—Tolkāppiyam, Kaḷaviyal. 7

20. Tolkāppiyam, Kaḷaviyal, 7 Commentary.

21. Tolkāppiyam, Kaḷaviyal, 8 Commentary.

22. "உயிரினுஞ் சிறந்தன்று நாணே நாணினுஞ்
செயிர்தீர் காட்சிச் சற்புச்சிறந் தன்றென."
—Tolkāppiyam, Kaḷaviyal, 22:1.2

23. "செறிவும் நிறையுஞ் செம்மையுஞ் செப்பும்
அறிவும் அருமையும் பெண்பா லன."
—Tolkāpplyam, Poruḷiyal, 15

24. ''அகத்துறை இலக்கியங்களில் எல்லாம் உலகிலேயே
ஒப்பற்று விளங்குவது தமிழில் உள்ள அகத்துறை
இலக்கியமே.''
—Ariñar Tanināyako Aḍikaḷar, Tamilttūtu, p. 44

25. ''பெண்ணின் இயல்பை சேக்ஸ்பியரைத் தவிர
வேறு எவரேனும் அறிவரெனக் கூறுவாரெனின்
அவர் அறிவிலர் அன்றேல் பேரறிஞர் என்ப.''
—Ariñar Taninayaka Aḍikaḷār, Tamilttūtu, p. 46

26. Dr. V. Sp. Manickam, The Tamil Concept of Love, pp. 317-318.

27. அறத்தொடு நின்றேனைக் கண்டு திறப்பட
என்னையர்க் குய்த்துரைத்தாள் யாய்;
அவருந், தெரிகணை நோக்கிச் சிலை நோக்கிக் கண்சேந்
தொருபக லெல்லாம் உருத்தெழுந் தாறி
இருவர்கட் குற்றமும் இல்லையால் என்று
தெருமந்து சாய்த்தார் தலை;
—Kuriñcikkali, 3:20-25

28. '' .... துறைவர்க்கு
உரிமை செப்பினர் நமரே......''
—Kuruntokai, 351:4-5

29. Dr. U. V Swaminatha Aiyar, Kuruntokai, 351, Commentary.
—Kuruntokai

30. ''அம்ம வாழி தோழி நம்மூர்ப்
பிரிந்தோர்ப் புணர்ப்போ ரிருந்தனர் கொல்லோ
தண்டுடைக் கையர் வெண்டலைச் சிதலவர்
நன்றுநன் றென்னு மாக்களோ
டின்றுபெரி தென்னு மாங்கண தவையே.''
—Kuruntokai, 146

31. ''காலே பரிதப் பினவே கண்ணே
நோக்கி நோக்கி வாளிழந் தனவே
அகலிரு விசும்பின் மீனினும்
பலரே மன்றவிவ் வுலகத்துப் பிறரே.''
—Kuruntokai, 44

32. Pālaikkali, 8.

33. Dr. V. Sp, Manickam, The Tamil Concept of Love, p. 318.

34. ‘‘எக்கர் ஞாழன் மலரின் மகளிர்
ஒண்டழை யயருந் துறைவன்
தண்டழை விலையென நல்கினன் நாடே.’’

35. ‘‘விலைவேண்டா ரெம்மினத் தாயர் மகளிர்
கொலையேற்றுக் கோட்டிடைத் தாம் வீழ்வார் மார்பின்
முலையிடைப் போலப் புகின்.’’
—Mullaikkali, 3·71-73

36. Akanāṉūṟu, 280 & 390.

37. ....ஆய்தொடிக் குறுமகள்
நலஞ்சால் விழுப்பொருள் கலநிறை கொடுப்பினும்
பெறலருங் குரைய ளாயின்......’’
—Akanāṉūṟu, 280, 4-6

38. ‘‘ஓரான் வல்சிச் சீரில் வாழ்க்கை
பெருநலக் குறுமகள் வந்தென
இனிவிழ வாயிற் றென்னுமிவ் வூரே.’’
—Kuṟuntokai, 265:4-6

39. ‘‘முழங்குகடன் முழவின் முசிறி யன்ன
நலஞ்சால் விழுப்பொருள் பணிந்துவந்து கொடுப்பினும்
புரைய ரல்லோர் வரையல ளிவளெனத்
தந்தையுங் கொடாஅ னாயின் வந்தோர்.’’
—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 343:10-13

40. (1) Naṟṟiṇai: 393; 10, ‘‘நமர் கொடை நேர்ந்தனர்’’
(2) Aiṅkuṟunūṟu: 300; 2-3
‘‘அஞ்சிறை விரிக்கும் பெருங்கல் வெற்பன்
வந்தன னெதிர்ந்தனர் கொடையே.’’
(3) Akanāṉūṟu: 282; 13—‘‘எந்தையும் எதிர்ந்தனம்
கொடையே.’’

41. நிலத்தினும் பெரிதே வானினு முயர்ந்தன்று
நீரினு மாரள வின்றே சாரற்
கருங்கோற் குறிஞ்சிப் பூக் கொண்டு
பெருந்தே னிழைக்கு நாடனொடு நட்பே.
—Kuṟuntokai, 3

42. குறுந்தாட் கூதளி யாடிய நெடுவரைப்
பெருந்தேன் கண்ட விருங்கை முடவன்
உட்கைச் சிறுகுடை கோலிக் கீழிருந்து
சுட்டுபு நக்கி யாங்குக் காதலர்
நல்கார் நயவா ராயினும்
பல்காற் காண்டலு முள்ளத்துக் கினிதே.

—Kuṟuntokai, 60

43. "வாருறு வணர்கதுப் புளரிப் புறஞ்சேர்பு
அழாஅ லென்றுநம் மழுதகண் டுடைப்பார்
யாரா குவர்கொல் தோழி."

—Kuṟuntokai, 82:1-3

44. "பூவிடைப் படினும் யாண்டுகழிந் தன்ன
நீருறை மகன்றிற் புணர்ச்சி போலப்
பிரிவரி தாகிய தண்டாக் காமமொ
டுடனுயிர் போகுக தில்ல கடனறிந்
திருவே மாகிய வுலகத்
தொருவே மாகிய புன்மைநா முயற்கே."

—Kuṟuntokai, 57

45. "உமணர் சேர்ந்து கழிந்த மருங்கி னகன்றலை
ஊர்பாழ்த் தன்ன வோமையம் பெருங்காடு
இன்னா வென்றி ராயின்
இனியவோ பெரும தமியோர்க்கு மனையே."

—Kuṟuntokai, 124

46. "வினையே யாடவர்க் குயிரே வாணுதல்
மனையுறை மகளிர்க் காடவ ருயிரென
நமக்குரைத் தோருந் தாமே
அழாஅ றோழி யழுங்குவர் செலவே."

—Kuṟuntokai, 135

47. "வேரல் வேலி வேர்க்கோட் பலவின்
சார னாட செவ்வியை யாகுமதி
யாரஃ தறிந்திசி னோரே சாரற்
சிறுகோட்டுப் பெரும்பழந் தூங்கி யாங்கிவள்
உயிர்தவச் சிறிது காமமோ பெரிதே."

—Kuṟuntokai, 18

48. "மால்வரை யிழிதருந் தூவெள் ளருவி
கன்முகைத் ததும்பும் பன்மலர்ச் சாரற்
சிறுகுடிக் குறவன் பெருந்தோட் குறுமகள்

நீரோ ரன்ன சாயல்
தீயோ ரன்னவென் னுரனவித் தன்றே."
—Kuṟuntokai, 95

49. "கடல் சூழ் மண்டிலம் பெறினும்
விடல்சூழ லனா னின்னுடை நட்பே."
—Kuṟuntokai, 300:7-8

50. எல்லா மெவனோ பதடி வைகல்
பாணர் படுமலை பண்ணிய வெழாலின்
வானத் தெழுஞ்சுவர் நல்லிசை வீழப்
பெய்த புலத்துப் பூத்த முல்லைப்
பசுமுகைத் தாது நாறு நறுநுதல்
அரிவை தோளிணைத் துஞ்சிக்
கழிந்த நாளிவண் வாழு நாளே.
—Kuṟuntokai, 323

51. "ஒருநாள் புணரப் புணரின்
அரைநாள் வாழ்க்கையும் வேண்டலன் யானே."
—Kuṟuntokai, 280:4-5

52. "முட்டாச் சிறப்பின் பட்டினம் பெறினும்
வாரிருங் கூந்தல் வயங்கிழை யொழிய
வாரேன் வாழிய நெஞ்சே."
—Paṭṭiṉappālai, 218-20

53. (1) "அன்றை யன்ன நட்பினன்."
—Kuṟuntokai, 385:6

(2) 'தலைநாள் அன்ன பேணலன்'
—Naṟṟiṇai, 332:8

(3) 'தண்டாக் காதலும் தலைநாள் போன்மே'
—Akanāṉūṟu, 332:15

(4) "அன்றை யன்ன விருப்போடு"
—Kuṟiñcippāṭṭu, 238

54. "பாண்மகன்
எண்ணுமுறை நிறுத்தயாழ் பண்ணினுள்ளும்
புதுவது புனைந்த திறத்தினும்
வதுவை நாளினும் இனியனால் எமக்கே."
—Akanāṉūṟu, 352:16-17

55. "திறவாக் கண்ண சாய்செவிக் குருளை
கறவாப் பால்முலை கவர்தல் நோனாது
புனிற்றுநாய் குரைக்கும் புல்லென் அட்டில்
காழ்சோர் முதுசுவர்க் கணச்சித லரித்த

பூழி பூத்த புழற்கா ளாம்பி
ஒல்குபசி உழந்த ஒடுங்குநுண் மருங்குல்
வளைக்கைக் கிணைமகள் வள்ளுகிர்க் குறைத்த
குப்பை வேளை உப்பிலி வெந்ததை
மடவோர் காட்சி நாணிக் கடையடைத்து
இரும்போர் ஒக்கலொ டொருங்குடன் மிசையும்.''
—Cirupāṇārruppaṭai, 13-139

56. ''துன்னருங் கானமுந் துணித லாற்றாய்
பின்னின்று பெயரச் சூழ்ந்தனை யாயி
னென்னிலை யுரைமோ நெஞ்சே.''
—Akanāṉūṟu, 181:1-3

57. ''அடங்கிய கற்பி னாய்நுதன் மடந்தை
உயர் நிலை யுலக மவன்புக வார.''
—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 249:10-11

58. ''ஆறிய கற்பி னடங்கிய சாயல்
ஊடினு மினிய கூறு மின்னகை
அமிர்து பொதிதுவர் வாயமர்த்த நோக்கிற்
சுடர்நுத லசை நடை யுள்ளலு முரியள்.
—Patiṟṟuppattu, 2:6:10-13

59. ''மங்கல மகளிரொடு மாலை சூட்டி.''
—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 332:5

60. ''சென்றதற் கொண்டு மனையோள் விரும்பி.''
—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 333:8

61. ''நிழலினும் போகாநின் வெள்யோள் பயந்த.''
—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 222:2

62. ''வசையில் மகளிர்.''
—Patiṟṟuppattu, 12:23

63. மெல்லியல் மகளிர்.''
—Patiṟṟuppattu, 40-23

64. ''சேயிழை மகளிர்.''
—Patiṟṟuppattu, 43:2

65. ''வடமீன்போல் தொழுதேத்த வயங்கிய கற்பினாள்.''
—Pālaikkali, 1:21

66. Kalitiokai Corpoḻivukaḷ. p. 63-64.

67. '' ....தம்மை
வருகென்றார் யார்கொலோ ஈங்கு.
—Maṟutakkali, 20:30-31

68. ''தொடிய எமக்குநீ யாரை பெரியார்க்
கடியரோ ஆற்றா தவர்.''

—Marutakkali, 23:3-4

69. ''யாரிவன் எங்கூந்தல் கொள்வான் இதுவுமோர்
ஊராண்மைக் கொத்த படிறுடைத் தெம்மனை
வாரல்நீ வந்தாங்கே மாறு.''

—Marutakkali, 24:1-3

70. ''யாரைநீ யெம்மில் புகுதர்வா யோரும்
புதுவ மலர்தேரும் வண்டே போல் யாழ
வதுவை விழவணி வைகலும் காட்டினையாய்.''

—Marutakkali, 33:1-3

71 ''தெறுவ தம்மவித் திணைப்பிறத் தல்லே.''

—Kuṟuntokai, 45:5

72. Akanāṉūṟu. 190:12

73. ''வடமீன் போல் தொழுதேத்த வயங்கிய கற்பினாள்.''

—Pālaikkali, 1:21

74. Bharathiyar Kavithaikal, Peṇkaḷ vitutalaik kummi.

75. ''பல்லிருங் கூந்தன் மகளிர்
ஒல்லா முயக்கிடைக் குழைகவென் றாரே.''

—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 73:13-14

76. ''மடங்கலிற் சினைஇ மடங்கா வுள்ளத்
தடங்காத் தாளை வேந்த ருடங்கியைந்
தென்னொடு பொருது மென்ப வவரை
ஆரம ரலறத் தாக்கித் தேரொ
டவர்ப்புறங் காணே னாயிற் சிறந்த
பேரம ருண்க ணிவளினும் பிரிக.''

—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 71:1-6

77. Puṟanāṉūṟu. 246

78. ''கருங்கட் டாக்கலை பெரும்பிறி துற்றெனக்
கைம்மை யுய்யாக் காமர் மந்தி
கல்லா வன்பறழ் கிளைமுதற் சேர்த்தி
ஓங்குவரை யடுக்கத்துப் பாய்ந்துயிர் செகுக்கும்
சார னாட நடு நாள்
வாரல் வாழியோ வருந்துதும் யாமே.''

—Kuṟuntokai, 69

79. ''அகலம் மகளிர்க் கல்லது மலர்ப்பறி யலையே.''
—Patirruppattu, 7:3; 4-5

80. ''பிறன்மனை நோக்காத பேராண்மை சான்றோர்க்கு
அறனொன்றோ ஆன்ற வொழுக்கு.''
—Tirukkural, 148

81. ''அன்பகத் தில்லா உயிர்வாழ்க்கை வன்பாற்கண்
வற்றல் மரந்தளிர்த் தற்று.''
—Tirukkural, 78

82. Puranānūru, 143.

83. Puranānūru, 144 & 145.

84. Puranānūru, 146.

85. Puranānūru, 147.

86. ''மனைவி உயர்வுங் கிழவோன் பணிவும்
நினையுங் காலைப் புலவியு ளுரிய.''
—Tolkāppiyam, Poruliyal, 31

87. Maruta-k-kali, 23.

88. Tañcai Vāṇan Kōvai, 398.

89. ''கழனி மாத்து விளைந்துகு தீம்பழம்
பழன வாளை கதூஉ மூரன்
எம்மிற் பெருமொழி கூறித் தம்மிற்
கையுங் காலுந் தூக்கத் தூக்கும்
ஆடிப் பாவை போல
மேவன செய்யுந் தன் புதல்வன் தாய்க்கே.''
—Kuruntokai, 8

90. ''அஞ்ச வந்த உரிமைக் கண்ணும்.''
—Tolkāppiyam, Kurpiyal, 54

91. எண்ணரும் பாசறைப் பெண்ணொடு புணரார்.
—Tolkāppiyam, Karpiyal, 131

92. ''ஆவு மானியற் பார்ப்பன மாக்களும்
பெண்டிரும் பிணியுடை யீரும் பேணித்
தென்புல வாழ்நர்க் கருங்கட னிறுக்கும்
பொன்போற் புதல்வர்ப் பெறாஅ தீரும்
எம்மம்பு கடிவிடுது நும்மரண் சேர்மினென
அறத்தாறு நுவலும் பூட்கை மறம்.''
—Puranānūru, 9:1-6

93. "பார்ப்பார் அறவோர் பசுப்பத் தினிப்பெண்டிர்
மூத்தோர் குழவி யெனுமிவரைக் கைவிட்டுத்
தீத்திறத்தார் பக்கமே சேர்கென்று காய்த்திய
பொற்றொடி ஏவப் புகையழல் மண்டிற்றே."
—Cilappatikāram, Vañcina mālai, 53-56

94. "கள்ளிற் கேளி ராத்திரை யுள்ளூர்ப்
பாளை தந்த பஞ்சியங் குறுங்காய்
ஓங்கிரும் பெண்ணை நுங்கொடு பெயரும்
ஆதி யருமன் மூதூரன்ன
அயவெள் ளாம்ப லம்பகை நெறித்தழை
தித்திக் குறங்கி னூழ்மா றலைப்ப."
—Kuruntokai, 293:1-6

95. Puranānūru, 151: Commentary.

96. "மகிழ்நன் மார்பே வெய்யை யானீ
அழியல் வாழி தோழி நன்னன்
நறுமா கொன்று நாட்டிற் போகிய
ஒன்று மொழிக் கோசர் போல
வன்கட் சூழ்ச்சியும் வேண்டுமாற் சிறிதே."
—Kuruntokai, 73

97. "எத்திணை மருங்கினும் மகடூஉ மடற்மேல்
பொற்புடை மரபின் இன்மை யான."
—Tolkāppiyam, Akattiṇaiyiyal, 35

98. "முந்நீர் வழக்கம் மகடூவோ டில்லை."
—Tolkāppiyam, Akattiṇaiyiyal, 34

99. மங்கலம் என்ப மனைமாட்சி மற்றதன்
நன்கலம் நன்மக்கட் பேறு.
—Tirukkural, 60

100. Akanānūru, 184.
101. Narriṇai, 330.
102. Kalittokai, 86.
103. Akanānūru, 66.
104. "முழவிமிழ் துணங்கை தூங்கும் விழவின்."
—Akanānūru, 336:16

105. "மகளிர் தழீஇய துணங்கை யானும்."
—Kuruntokai, 312;

106. (1) ''நிரைதொடி நல்லவர் துணங்கையுள் தலைக்
கொள்ளக்
கரையிடைக் கிழிந்தநின் காழகம்வந்
துரையாக்கால்.'
—Kalittokai, 73:16-17

(2) ''மெல்லிணர்க் கண்ணி மிலைந்த மைந்தர்
எல்வளை மகளிர் தலைக்கை தரூஉற்று.''
—Puranāṉūṟu, 24:8-9

107. ''மடவரல் மகளிரொடு பகல்விளை யாடிப்
பெறற்கருந் தொல்சீர்த் துறக்க மேய்க்கும்.''
—Perumpaṇarruppaṭai, 387-388

108. "We may infer that women of the period had a free social life, and enjoyed themselves sporting in the river."
—J. V. Chellaiah, Pattuppāṭṭu, Translation, p. 46

109. ''வையெயிற் றவர் நாப்பண் வகையணிப் பொலிந்துநீ
தையினீ ராடிய தவந்தலைப் படுவாயே.''
—Kalittokai, 59

110. ''அந்தி விழவிற் றூரியங் கறங்கத்
திண்கதிர் மதாணி யொண்குறு மாக்களை
ஓம்பினர்த் தழீஇத் தாம்புணர்ந்து முயங்கித்
தாதணி தாமரைப் போதுபிடித் தாங்குத்
தாமு மவரும் ஓராங்கு விளங்கக்
காமர் கவினிய பேரிளம் பெண்டிர்
பூவினர் புகையினர் தொழுவனர் பழிச்சிச்
சிறந்து புறங்காக்குங் கடவுட் பள்ளியும்.''
—Maturaikkāñci, 460-467

111. ''தைய லவரொடுந் தந்தா ரவரொடும்
கைம்மக வோடுங் காத லவரொடும்
தெய்வம் பேணித் திசை தொழுதனர் சென்மின்.''
—Paripāṭal, 15:46-48

112. Aiṅkuṟunūṟu, 257.

113. ''யாண்டுபல வாக நரையில வாகுதல்
யாங்கா கியரென வினவுதி ராயின்
மாண்டவென் மனைவியொடு மக்களு நிரம்பினர்

யான்கண் டனையரென் னிளையரும் வேந்தனும்
அல்லவை செய்யான் காக்கும் அதன்றலை
ஆன்றவிந் தடங்கிய கொள்கைச்
சான்றோர் பலர்யான் வாழு மூரே.''

—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 191

114. ''மன்னுக பெரும நீயே தொன்னிலைப்
பெருமலை விடரகத் தருமிசைக் கொண்ட
சிறியிலை நெல்லித் தீங்கனி குறியா
தாத னின்னகத் தடக்கிச்
சாத னீங்க வெமக்கீத் தனையே.''

—Puṟanāṉūṟu, 91:7-11

115. Puṟanāṉūṟu, 95

116. Tirukkuṟal, Peṇvaḻicēral-Parimēlaḻakar, commentary.

117. Tiruvaḷḷuvar allatu vāḻkkai viḷakkam p. 206-210

118. Iṉṉā Nāṟpatu, 37, 3-4.

119. ''காழ்கொண்ட இல்லாளைக்
கோலாற் புடைத்தலும்.''

—Tirikaṭukam, 3

120. ''எதிர் நிற்கும் பெண்ணும்.''

—Tirikaṭukam, 67

121. ''உடுத்தாடை யில்லாதார் நீராட்டும் பெண்டிர்
தொடுத்தாண் டவைப்போர் புகலும்-கொடுத்தளிக்கும்
ஆண்மை யுடையவர் நல்குரவும் இம்மூன்றும்
காண அரியவென் கண்.''

—Tirikaṭukam, 71

122. ''பழியஞ்சான் வாழும் பசுவும் அழிவினால்
கொண்ட அருந்தவம் விட்டானும்—கொண்டிருந்
தில்லஞ்சி வாழும் எருதும் இவர்மூவர்
நெல்லுண்டல் நெஞ்சிற்கோர் நோய்.

—Tirikaṭukam, 78

123. K. K. Pillai, The Social History of the Tamils, Part, I, p. 390-391.

124. ஓவத்தன்ன வினைபுனை நல்லிற்
பாவை யன்ன நல்லோள் கணவன்.

—Patiṟṟuppattu, 7:1:-34

125. "பெண்மை சான்று பெருமட நிலைஇக்
கற்பிறை கொண்ட கமழுஞ் சுடர்நுதற்
புரையோள் கணவ."
—Patirruppattu, 7:10:14-16

126. "சேணாறு நல்லிசைச் சேயிழை கணவ."
—Patirruppattu, 9:8:36

127. "செழும்பல விழுந்த கொழும்பஃ றண்பனைக்
காவிரிப் படப்பை நன்னா டன்ன
வளங்கெழு குடைச்சூ லடங்கிய கொள்கை
ஆறிய கற்பிற் றேறிய நல்லிசை
வண்டார் கூந்த லொண்டொடி கணவ."
—Patirruppattu, 9:10:46-50

128. "நல்லோள் கணவ னிவனெனப்
பல்லோர் கூறயா நாணுகஞ் சிறிதே."
—Kuruntokai, 14:5-6

129. "மறுவில் கற்பின் வாணுதல் கணவன்."
—Tirumurukārruppaṭai, 6

130. "நம் செந்தில்மேய
வள்ளி மணாளர்க்குத் தாதை கண்டாய்."
—Tiruñāṉa campantar tēvāram;
Tirumaraḻkkāṭṭuppathikam

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டாக்டர் சி. பாலசுப்பிரமணியன் நூல்கள்

சேரநாட்டுச் செந்தமிழ் இலக்கியங்கள்
தமிழ் இலக்கிய வரலாறு
சங்க இலக்கியம் சில பார்வைகள்
மண்ணில் நல்ல வண்ணம் வாழலாம்
இலக்கிய அணிகள்
மனோன்மணீயம்
உருவும் திருவும்
கட்டுரை வளம்
மலர் காட்டும் வாழ்க்கை
இலக்கியக் காட்சிகள்
சான்றோர்கள் தமிழ்
பாரதியும் பாரதிதாசனும்
பாவைப் பாட்டு
வாழ்வியல் நெறிகள்
நெஞ்சின் நினைவுகள்
வாழையடி வாழை
காரும் தேரும்
சங்ககால மகளிர்
முருகன் காட்சி
கவிச்சக்கரவர்த்தி ஒட்டக்கூத்தர்
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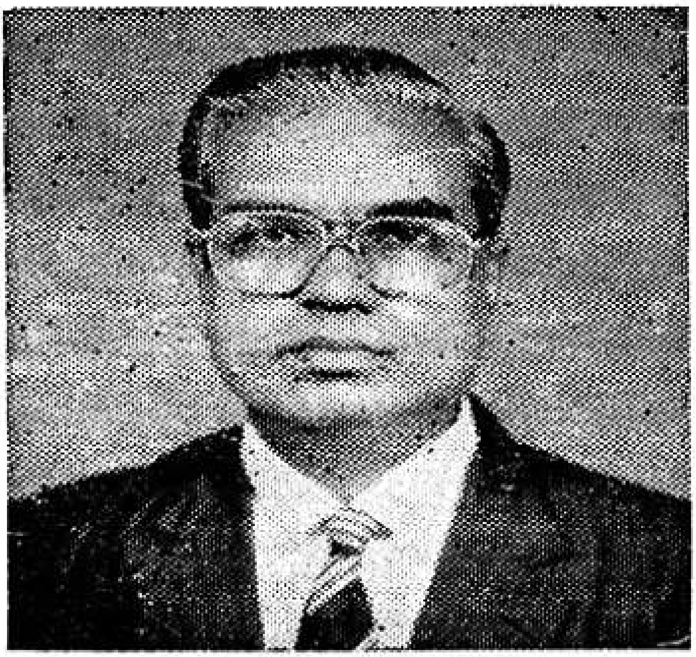
திருவெம்பாவை விளக்கம்
நல்லோர் நல்லுரை
A Critical Study of Kuruntokai

Prof. **Dr. C. BALASUBRAMANIAN**, Vice-Chancellor, Tamil University, Thanjavur (from 4-12-1989) is an elite product of late Prof. Dr. Mu. Va. He hails from a weaver's



family belonging to Backward Class. Born in village Gingee in South Arcot District on 10-5-1935, he secured, First Class in M.A. in 1957. His research works viz., "A Critical Study of Kuruntokai" and "A Study of the Literature of the Cera Country" earned him M. Litt. and Ph.D. degrees of the University of Madras in 1963 & 1970 respectively.

He humbly started his academic career as Tutor in 1957. His academic position was gradually and steadily elevated from Tutorship to Lecturership, from Lecturership to Readership and then from Readership to Professorship. He became the Professor and Head, Dept. of Tamil of the Madras University in December 1976. He rose to the position of the Head, Department of Tamil Language, Madras University in 1980. With his 32 years of teaching and research experience, he has produced about 30 Ph. D. s and 100 M. Phils., apart from a good number of graduates and post-graduates. He has also published to his credit about 25 books, including four works in English.

His 'Ilakkia Anikal' won the First Prize of the Government of Tamilnadu for the best work on Literary Studies in 1972 and his 'Ceranattuccentamil Ilakkiyankal' won the Cash Prize of Rs. 20,000/- the Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar Award for the Best Research Work in 1987. He also won the cash prize of Rs. 5000/- in 1990 along with V. G. Santhanam Ammal Award for the Best Literary Writer in Tamil. Several titles like Pulavar Eru, Cencor pulavar, Canka-nurcelvar, Cankattamilc celvar etc., were awarded to him in recognition of his contribution to Tamil Language and Literature. He has visited all over India and countries like Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Singapore and Mauritius and delivered scholarly lectures. He has also been serving sincerely in various academic committees of differant Universities and the State and the Central Govt. bodies for the cause of higher edudation and research. He is the senior most Professor of Tamil in the State.